

Abu Mazen to sign accord for PLO

TUNIS (AFP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) architect of the autonomy deal with Israel, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), will sign the agreement for the organisation at a ceremony Monday in Washington, it was announced here Friday. "If Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, refuses to go to Washington to sign the accord," Mr. Abbas will go in his place, the Palestine Liberation Organisation's Information Department said. Mr. Kaddoumi, who is considered the PLO's foreign minister, is opposed to the agreement which calls for autonomy starting in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho and has said he would not sign the deal. A co-founder with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat of the PLO's main group Fatah, Mr. Kaddoumi said this week he believed the autonomy and recognition accords "harm the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and the PLO Charter. "No body of leaders is empowered to force the Palestinian people to renounce their struggle for their national goals, namely the liberation of their land, the right to return and the establishment of an independent state." Mr. Abbas is in charge of the PLO's Department of Arab and International Affairs.

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PLO, Israel formalise mutual recognition

PLO executives approve autonomy accord

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL AND the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Friday opened a new era in the Middle East by recognising each other after three decades of conflict, but many hurdles are left on the path to a full Arab-Israeli peace.

The PLO executive committee approved an agreement with Israel for self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, clearing the way for signing of the historic accord next week.

"The committee has approved the accord on self-rule despite some minor reservations," said committee member Mohammad Zahdi Nashashibi.

He said the reservations concerned mainly the economic aspects of the agreement but declined to elaborate. Palestinians were worried they will not receive enough economic aid to make their fledgling government viable.

Mr. Nashashibi said U.S. President Bill Clinton had invited PLO leader Yasser Arafat to travel to Washington to sign the accord.

Mr. Arafat might go to Washington if Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin did likewise, Mr. Nashashibi said.

But earlier in the day, Mr. Rabin told Israeli Television he had no plans to meet with Mr. Arafat when the agreement is formalised in the U.S. capital.

It thus appeared likely the agreement would be signed by lower-level officials.

Mr. Nashashibi said the Gaza-Jericho agreement was approved by the committee with a "large majority" of the 12 members in attendance but refused to give further details.

The meeting came a day after Israel and the PLO recognised each other, clearing away the biggest hurdle to the signature of the self-rule accord next week.

The accord met with determined opposition from a vocal minority of the executive committee.

One member, Abdullah Hourani, boycotted the meeting and threatened to resign if the accord were approved.

It is a historic moment that hopefully will bring about an end to 100 years of bloodshed and misery between the Palestinian

people and Israel," Mr. Rabin said after signing the letter "Y.

Rabin acknowledged that the course he was taking with his longtime foe was chancy.

"I see this as a moment of importance with many opportunities, but not a few risks... all of this is being done with the assumption that the other side will also fulfil all its obligations."

In a measure of the distrust that still bedevils relations, Mr. Rabin took out his glasses and carefully read the full-page letter from Mr. Arafat as the audience of officials, uniformed army officers and journalists waited in silence.

With a broad smile, Mr. Arafat announced in Tunis hours earlier that he had signed a document in which the PLO recognises Israel's right to exist in peace and security and renounces violence (see page 2).

Norwegian Foreign Minister

Johan Joergen Holst, who brokered the dramatic Middle East breakthrough, carried the letter to Mr. Rabin on Friday.

He sat by Mr. Rabin at the ceremony along with Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, architect of the autonomy plan which will

start a month after the signature.

The recognition, which will be rubber-stamped by Israel's cabinet on Sunday, and autonomy documents go before the Israeli parliament (Knesset) for ratification after signature.

Mr. Rabin is ensured of a majority of at least one in the 120 member parliament despite a coalition crisis.

Meanwhile, Israeli support for the Palestinian autonomy agreement has increased over the last week to reach 60 per cent, according to an opinion poll published Friday.

In Tunis, meanwhile, three Palestinians resigned from the PLO's Executive Committee Friday.

Two of the founders — Khalil Al Wazir (Abu Jibad) and Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) — have been assassinated. The other survivor, Khaled Al Hassan and his brother Hani, have reservations about his concessions to Israel.

A source close to Mr. Kadoumi said he would not sign the peace agreement with Israel on Monday, a mission for which he would have been the natural choice, but he would stay on as head of the PLO Political Department and member of the PLO Executive Committee.

Mr. Kadoumi argued that the Palestine National Council, not Mr. Arafat, chose him to fill these positions, the source said.

Two other members of the

dissidents for recognition — renouncing violence and promising to amend parts of the PLO charter offensive to Israel.

Mr. Kadoumi, in a statement after the meeting, said: "I believe, after study and deep reflection, that the texts of the draft (self-rule agreement) and of the mutual recognition (agreement) violate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the Palestine National Charter."

With Mr. Kadoumi gone, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) is the last of Mr. Arafat's original comrades in the main PLO group Fatah to support Mr. Arafat's diplomatic strategy.

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Two other members of the

committee, Taysir Khaled of the Damascus-based wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) and Abdul Rahim Mallouh of the Popular Front (PFLP), said Friday they were formally resigning.

But Mr. Khaled and Mr. Mallouh were already known opponents and Mr. Arafat had discounted them in his calculations of the balance of power in the Executive Committee.

The other dissenters in the Executive Committee are independent member Abdullah Hourani, Ali Ishak of the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF) and Mahmoud Ismail of the pro-Iraqi Arab Liberation Front (ALF).

The PLF and ALF are small groups with relatively few supporters in the occupied territories, where support for Mr. Arafat will be most crucial when self-rule comes into effect.

"Certainly the process leading to resolving all the problems as they relate to Israel and Jordan, in the beginning, will be very very soon," he said.

"In fact we have an agenda. We have held off ratifying it or working on it until such time as we saw some progress on the Palestinian track," he said.

"Now that that is there, we will begin very soon and we hope the same thing will happen between Syria and Lebanon, and then we will have the comprehensive

peace we have all sought.

He said an agreement with a peace agenda with Israel would be approved shortly after the signing ceremony at the White House on Monday.

"An agreement on an agenda, yes, if not Monday, then Tuesday," he said (See page 10).

King Hussein called the PLO- Israel accord reached Friday "a very important beginning, a very important landmark. I would certainly hope it will lead to what all of us have been hoping and praying for for so many years — the establishment of a just and durable peace."

Asked if Jordan would support that element of the PLO which backs the recognition of Israel, even if that element were a minority, King Hussein said: "I will continue to support the Palestinian people and their sole legitimate representative, the PLO."

"We will never encourage anything that will mean fracturing the Palestinians," King Hussein said.

Lopsided recognition deal weighs down Palestinian supporters and critics alike

By Lamis K. Andoni

THE MUTUAL recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) opens new horizons for the long-awaited peace in the Middle East, but the terms of the mutual recognition fall far short of laying an adequate basis for a solution for the Israeli-Arab conflict that addresses Palestinian national rights and aspirations, supporters and critics of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat say.

The Israeli recognition, however, is carefully worded to avoid an acknowledgement of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and a party to the peace process.

Supporters of the accord argue that the mere recognition by Israel of the PLO amounts to a recognition of the Palestinian people's right as a nation. They also point out that once the PLO sits on the negotiating table Israel would not be able to cross out the Palestinian national rights from agenda.

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Israel's not referring to the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people leaves the door open for a shift in the Israeli position once the elections for the administrative council as provided for the agreed-upon autonomy accord.

Mr. Arafat appears unperturbed by the shortcoming of the Israeli statements, partly because he believes that his supporters, specifically his mainstream Fatah group, could dominate the council.

But he is still taking a serious risk. Even if his supporters dominated the council, it will be a body representing the Palestinians in the occupied territories excluding the diaspora, while the PLO has always represented the Palestinian people as a nation everywhere.

Mr. Arafat is expected to encounter serious obstacles in upholding most of the commitments made in the statement if there were no similar reciprocal

measures, particularly concerning Israeli violence, carried out in the near future.

Some Palestinian sources say that there have been verbal guarantees and commitments that Israel will ease its pressure on the Palestinians in the occupied territories and agree to Palestinian demands regarding the state of human rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

There are already reports from the occupied territories that Israel will release a big number of prisoners. The same sources said that in the next two months Israel will take other "confidence-building measures" without necessarily announcing a prior commitment.

But the fact remains that Mr. Arafat has agreed to make such commitments that involve an implicit call to end the intifada and curb Palestinian resistance — two points that have raised fears even among his supporters.

NEWS ANALYSIS

In an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo denied such interpretations, arguing that it was unrealistic to expect the Palestinians to drop resisting the Israeli occupation.

This particular commitment, which leaves some freedom — for realistic reasons — to resist the occupation could spark a showdown with the PLO groups, especially that it confirms fears that the Israelis expect the organisation to achieve what they have failed to do — to balt all forms of Palestinian resistance.

The sharp imbalances reflected in the two recognition statements have sparked serious divisions within the PLO, prompting one of Mr. Arafat's life-long comrades to publicly reject both the terms of Palestinian recognition of Israel and the accord on a limited Palestinian autonomy, which is scheduled to be signed in Washington next Monday.

In a press statement, Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's Foreign Affairs Department and one of the co-founders of the mainstream Fatah movement, charged that the terms

of the PLO's autonomy accord are "doubtlessly the closest the PLO could give in response to the Israeli demand to end the uprising.

The use of the word "terrorism," which was repeated twice in the statement and the letter, is also a source of contention among the Palestinians since it is viewed as an admission that Palestinian resistance acts could be described as "terrorist," while there was no similar renunciation or condemnation of Israeli practices against the Palestinians.

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Clinton restores formal contacts with PLO

Combined agency dispatches

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON

Friday restored American diplomatic contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the prelude to a breakthrough peace accord between Israel and the Palestinians at the White House on Monday.

"Today marks a shining moment of hope for people in the Middle East and indeed the entire world," Mr. Clinton said. He pledged the United States would remain a "full and active partner" in attempts to bring peace to Israel and all its Arab neighbours.

The White House was arranging an elaborate ceremony to seal the accord between Israel and the PLO.

Mr. Clinton said Israel and the PLO would decide who would attend the White House signing ceremony for the two sides. He did not directly answer when asked whether PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat would be there, although he is not expected to attend.

Mr. Clinton's nationally televised Rose Garden appearance underscored the dramatic change in the Middle East, a region long scarred by Arab-Israeli hostilities.

"I have decided to resume the dialogue and the contacts between the United States and the PLO," Mr. Clinton said.

He described the agreement as "an historic and honourable compromise between two peoples who have been locked in a bloody struggle for almost a century."

The announcement came after Israel and the PLO announced an historic agreement to recognise each other.

"These PLO commitments justify a resumption of dialogue," Mr. Clinton said.

The last contact between PLO and the U.S. was in December 1988 when President Ronald Reagan opened diplomatic dialogue with them but it was suspended by his successor George Bush in June 1990 after a faction of the organisation staged an abortive raid on an Israeli beach.

"This is a moment where we are looking forward with hope, rather than backward in anger and hostility," PLO spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said here Friday.

U.S. to help implement agreement, page 2

Regent: Time to contemplate if approach is comprehensive

By Mariana M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Friday reserved direct comment on the agreement on mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), saying it was a time for contemplation of the situation.

"I have nothing to say at this moment," the Regent told a Jordan Television correspondent. "But I believe that responsibilities dictate that we wait and ponder before tackling subjects contemporaneously ... and concentrate on the comprehensive nature of the solution lest we fall in enemy traps."

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U.S. will help implement Mideast accord — Clinton

WASHINGTON (USA) — The United States will be "closely involved" in helping to implement the agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), President Clinton promised Thursday.

Shortly after telephoning his congratulations to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Mr. Clinton told reporters: "This is a very brave and courageous thing that has been done." The president spoke to reporters in Cleveland, Ohio, just after completing the call to occupied Jerusalem from his quarters aboard Air Force One; the White House made available a transcript of his conversation with the media.

White House Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers said Mr. Clinton was informed about the "general agreement" between the two Mideast parties in a conference call with White House officials in Washington. With Vice President Al Gore nearby, the president told Mr. Rabin, "You're probably the only person in your country who could have done this. This will make a huge difference."

According to news accounts, the "general agreement" provides for mutual recognition of Israel and the PLO — with the PLO renouncing its charter provisions calling for destruction of Israel. The parties are agreed on an interim period of self-rule for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and in the town of Jericho on the West Bank of the Jordan River.

Ms. Myers said Clinton also discussed with Mr. Rabin the potential risks involved in the new arrangements, with the president assuring the Israeli leader that "whatever we can do to minimise the risks, count me in."

Mr. Clinton said he is "extremely happy that it has finally happened. I am very, very hopeful for the future. And this is a very brave and courageous thing that has been done."

The president noted that he thought agreement had been reached now because "the circumstances were propitious," and because many leaders in the area — including Mr. Rabin and PLO Leader Yasser Arafat — "were at a point in their lives, their careers, their experiences, where for all kinds of reasons, they thought the time had come... I think most people thought they had exhausted their reasonable alternatives and they didn't want to go on in this manner anymore."



Bill Clinton

Mr. Clinton cautioned that much remains to be done to bring the agreement to fruition, adding again that the United States "is committed to doing our share." He said he believes Congress will find funds, despite budgetary constraints, to help with the work of reconstruction in the region. "I think our people will appreciate the absolutely historic significance of this," Mr. Clinton explained. "This is a huge development in the 20th Century."

Asked if Washington had been "frozen out" of the climactic negotiations in Norway, Mr. Clinton said he had been kept aware "in the most general terms" of what was happening. He added that "we didn't know a lot of the details, nor should we have known. I think this matter was so volatile and so difficult that it may be that the only way the final agreements could have been reached on the principles was in a secret and totally unknown channel." The secrecy, he said, enabled the parties "to reach out to one another" without sniping from the sidelines.

The president recalled that Washington's job was to provide the framework, with Russia, for talks between the parties, and to place on the table "a set of basic principles" governing a comprehensive settlement between Israel and its Arab neighbours, and between Israel and the Palestinians. He said it is his understanding that 70 per cent of those basic principles were included "in the ultimate agreement that came out of the secret channel."

The U.S. task, he said, "was to keep these talks going in Washington." He praised Secretary of State Warren Christopher for twice reviving the peace process — first when Israel expelled about 400 Palestinians, and again

when Israel attacked targets in Lebanon.

"We did everything we could have," Mr. Clinton asserted, "and a lot of our work is still to be done now that the agreement has been made and is public and has to be implemented. And we're prepared to do our part."

At the State Department, spokesman Michael McCurry said that Mr. Christopher intends to use the momentum created by "this historic breakthrough to continue the hard work on some of the other tracks" of the Middle East peace process.

In bilateral talks in Washington, Israel has been meeting separately with delegations from Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The spokesman noted that "there are some indications that some of those tracks are coming together as well."

But he cautioned reporters that it was "far from clear" that a reported Israeli-Jordanian agreement would follow shortly after the PLO-Israeli accord. (Later, a U.S. official said there is a broad outline for a Jordanian-Israeli agreement, but they "may have a ways to go.")

Mr. McCurry said the United States meanwhile would examine the positions of the PLO in the agreement with Israel to see if they meet the U.S. conditions for resuming the dialogue with that group.

"Clearly, we'll be looking" at the comments of the PLO as they formalise their documents "to see if those conditions" are satisfied, Mr. McCurry said without elaborating what those conditions are.

The spokesman noted that he believed there are no legal barriers to resuming the dialogue with the PLO, which was suspended in 1990.

"Resuming a dialogue and having contacts with the PLO is a much different question than having some formal recognition," he told questioners, adding that those are complicated questions and "I don't think they are going to be addressed in the immediate future."

One U.S. concern, an official noted, is whether the PLO has responsibility to address actions of "all elements" of the PLO — especially those that have not denounced acts of "terrorism".

The spokesman reiterated that the world community is "deeply appreciative" of Norway's efforts in helping mediate the agreement.

Monday's signing ceremony to include Baker

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — A White House signing ceremony Monday for the peace agreement between Israel and the (PLO) will likely include former Secretary of State James Baker as one of the guests.

The ceremony was set for 11 a.m. (1500 GMT) on Monday on the South Lawn of the White House, an administration official said.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher has always intended to invite Mr. Baker, who worked hard to set up the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace talks under President George Bush, another U.S. official said.

Beyond that, Washington officials offered few details of the guest list, and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told CNN that his government has not yet decided who will attend.

Likely candidates are PLO officials Farouk Kaddoumi and Abu Mazen.

Mr. Baker said Thursday the fall of communism and the end of the cold war set the stage for mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO.

"There are a number of different reasons, not the least of which, I think is the fact that the United States and its allies defeated communism, won the cold war," Mr. Baker, said in an interview with CNN television.

Among other catalysts for the Israeli-PLO accord, Mr. Baker cited the allied Gulf war victory against Iraq, which he described as a "clear contest between moderate Arabs on the hand (...) and radical Arab states on the other."

He also mentioned the "deep-seated desire" of the Israeli people "to cease being a nation constantly at war," as well as the PLO's political and financial troubles.

Mr. Baker said that all the U.S. administration — after Richard Nixon's "can take pride in what is happening," since the Middle East peace process had always had the support of both Democrats and republicans.

The former secretary of state praised the "political courage" of the protagonists of the Israeli-PLO agreement: "Mr. Rabin and his Foreign Minister Peres, on the Israeli side, and Mr. Arafat, Faisal Husseini and Hanan Ashrawi, on the Palestinian.

Texts of Israel-PLO recognition exchanges

THE FOLLOWING is the text of a letter from Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin affirming recognition of the state of Israel:

Mr. Prime Minister,

The signing of the declaration of principles marks a new era in the history of the Middle East. In firm conviction thereof, I would like to confirm the following PLO commitments:

The PLO recognises the right of the state of Israel to exist in peace and security.

The PLO accepts United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

The PLO commits itself to the Middle East peace process, and to a peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two sides and declares that all outstanding issues relating to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations.

The PLO considers that the signing of the declaration of principles constitutes a historic event inaugurating a new epoch of peaceful coexistence, free from violence and all other acts which endanger peace and stability. Accordingly, the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators.

In view of the promise of a new era and the signing of the declaration of principles and based on Palestinian acceptance of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the PLO affirms that those articles of the Palestinian covenant which deny Israel's right to exist, and the provisions of the covenant which are inconsistent with the commitments of this letter are now inoperative and no longer valid. Consequently, the PLO undertakes to submit to the Palestinian National Council for formal approval the necessary changes in regard to the Palestinian covenant.

Sincerely,
Yasser Arafat
Chairman
The Palestine Liberation Organisation

Arafat letter to Holst

The following is the text of a letter from Mr. Arafat to Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Joergen Holst, who brokered the dramatic Middle East breakthrough.

Dear Minister Holst,

I would like to confirm to you that, upon the signing of the declaration of principles, I will include the following positions in my public statements:

In light of the new era marked by the signing of the declaration of principles, the PLO encourages and calls upon the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to take part in the steps leading to the normalisation of life, rejecting violence and terrorism, contributing to peace and stability and participating actively in shaping reconstruction, economic development and cooperation.

Sincerely,
Yasser Arafat
Chairman
The Palestine Liberation Organisation

Text of Rabin's response

The following is the text of Mr. Rabin's reply:

Mr. Chairman,

In response to your letter of Sept. 9, 1993, I wish to confirm to you that, in light of the PLO commitments included in your letter, the government of Israel has decided to recognise the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process.

Yitzhak Rabin
Prime Minister of Israel

Remarks at ceremony

Here is the text of Mr. Rabin's remarks in English after he signed the letter recognising the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people:

"I have just received a letter of Chairman Arafat in the name of the leadership of the PLO in which he takes commitments to recognise Israel and its right to exist in peace and security, to solve the long conflict between the Palestinians and Israel through negotiations in a peaceful way."

"He takes commitment to end terror and violence, to renounce it. He takes upon himself to look at the articles of the Palestinian covenant inoperative and no longer valid. I see in this commitment on the part of the PLO a change, a dramatic change that opens the road towards reconciliation and peace between the Palestinians and Israel."

"It is the first agreement between Palestinians and Israel since the creation of the state of Israel. I am fully aware about the difficulties that face the Palestinians and Israel in the solution of our problems. I see in it a big step towards the achievement of these goals knowing that still it's a long way to go with obstacles on the road that we shall have to remove — and it is possible to remove them."

"I believe it starts a new era, an era in which we will do our best to achieve peace and security to Israel and at the same time to give the Palestinians the right in the context of agreement about interim period to run their affairs."

"I believe that there is a great opportunity of changing not only the relations between the Palestinians and Israel but to expand it to the solution of the conflict between Israel and other Arab countries and other Arab peoples."

"It's an historic moment that hopefully will bring about an end to 100 years of bloodshed, misery, between the Palestinians and Jews, between Palestinians and Israel."

"I would like to thank you, minister of foreign affairs of Norway, for your efforts, for your involvement in the achievement of these papers and others. I would like to thank you, Shimon (Peres), for your efforts to bring it about. As I said it's only the beginning, but a tremendous, important beginning."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey seeks Russian help to end Iraq ban

MOSCOW (R) — Turkey and Russia will cooperate in trying to lift a U.N. embargo against Iraq for invading Kuwait in 1990. Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said Thursday. Ankara lost access to cheap oil from Iraq, formerly its major supplier, after the introduction of the U.N. Security Council sanctions which forced the closure of a twin Iraqi oil pipeline to Turkey's Mediterranean Yumurtalik terminal. "President Boris Yeltsin has agreed to cooperation between Turkey and Russia to lift the anti-Iraqi embargo," the U.S.-trained economist told a Moscow news conference at the end of a two-day official visit. "We will try to conclude this agreement with the help of the United States, as part of a three-way cooperation," said Ms. Ciller, who met Mr. Yeltsin, her Russian counterpart Viktor Chernomyrdin and other political leaders during her visit. Mrs. Ciller did not say in what specific way Russia and Turkey would cooperate to help lift the U.N. embargo. Russia has repeatedly vowed to stick to the sanctions, Moscow told Iraq last month not to barbary any false hopes for wider cooperation before it fully bows to the Security Council demands.

F-16 plane crashes in Egypt during training

CAIRO (R) — A U.S.-made F-16 warplane crashed in a village northeast of Cairo on Thursday during military exercises, security sources said. The fate of the two pilots was not immediately known. The Defense Ministry refused to comment on the incident but the security sources said the warplane crashed in the village of Abu Sweir near the town of Ismailia, some 120 kilometres northeast of Cairo. Egyptian air, ground and naval forces have been engaged in live military exercises for the past 10 days.

Rushdie wounded by lack of Indian support

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Bombay-born novelist Salman Rushdie said in an interview published Friday that he is aggrieved by the lack of support from India, the first country to ban "The Satanic Verses." Interviewed in Prague by the Times of India, the writer with an Iranian death sentence over his head said, "the rupture with India is what hurts me the most. India banned my book before it even arrived India. And my own friends hardly made any fuss about it. There has never been a campaign in India for lifting the ban, or allowing me to visit." Mr. Rushdie said one of his "dearest wishes" is to visit India. He also said there were indications that the fatwa issued against him for "blasphemy" in February 1989 may be lifted soon. "The threat against me is a matter of (Iranian) internal, domestic policy rather than foreign policy," he said. "Something has got to give and it may be sooner than I thought." I have never denied that the Satanic Verses is provocative," he added. "But provocation is not an excuse for murder, just as wearing a short skirt is not an excuse for rape."

Lebanon wins Saudi pledge of \$150m in aid

RIYADH (R) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri ended a visit to Saudi Arabia Thursday after talks on a Saudi contribution to a Lebanon development fund. Lebanese officials accompanying Mr. Hariri said the kingdom promised the prime minister, a longtime associate of the Saudi royal family up to \$150 million. They said \$100 million would be cash and \$50 million material help. There was no official announcement on the contribution. Arab League members promised aid to finance the rebuilding of south Lebanon after Israeli attacks in July. Mr. Hariri had already secured \$220 million from other Arab states before the Saudi visit. Lebanon has been pledged a total of \$500 million.

Djibouti rebels say troops killed hundreds

PARIS (R) — Afar rebels in the Red Sea republic of Djibouti said Thursday government soldiers had killed hundreds of civilians in a drive they called as "ethnic cleansing." In a statement issued in Paris, the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) said troops were venting anger on civilians after suffering setbacks at the bands of Afar rebels over the past three months. "Djibouti government troops have launched a vast operation of repression against civilian populations in the north and south — (region of) Tadjourah, Obock and Dikhil — executing several hundred people in cold blood," the statement said. The rebel group, opposed to the government of President Hassan Gouled Aptidon, said the killings were "cleansing of an ethnic character." No comment was immediately available from the Djiboutian embassy or the French foreign ministry. France maintains a large garrison in its former colony.

U.S. lawmakers oppose accepting Iraqi PoWs

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton should stop the resettlement of Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) from the Gulf war in the United States, a group of U.S. house of representative members said Thursday. They were protesting the U.S. decision to accept about 1,000 Iraqi PoWs and 2,400 family members as refugees since the end of the war in 1991. "The U.S. government is resettling former enemy soldiers who took up arms against our troops in a war at taxpayer expense. We have homeless veterans in our own streets that aren't getting this kind of preferential treatment," Rep. Don Manzullo said at a news conference. He and Rep. Cliff Stearns have introduced a resolution to end the resettlement policy that now has about 35 co-sponsors, most of them Republicans. They also asked for House hearings on the policy. The State Department says the Iraqis admitted meet the U.S. and international definitions of refugee. It said about 13,000 former Iraqi prisoners of war in Saudi Arabia were determined by International Committee of the Red Cross to have civilian status and by the United Nations to be refugees.

UAE cancels talks with Iran on islands

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) said on Friday it was cancelling a visit by a senior official to Iran to resume negotiations on an island dispute after Tehran renewed its claim of the islands. The visit was to be made by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sheikh Hamdan Ben Zayed Al Nahayan next week at the invitation of Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, who came to the UAE in June. "It has been decided to cancel the visit because the UAE is convinced that there is no desire by the Iranian side to ensure the success of the visit," the official news agency quoted a foreign ministry authoritative source as saying.

Timetable for Palestinian self-rule

WASHINGTON (R) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) declaration of principles on Palestinian self-rule envisages a 10-month timetable leading up to elections for a Palestinian council.

The council will run the West Bank and Gaza Strip for an interim period of five years, during which Israel and the Palestinians will negotiate details of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

As soon as the Declaration of Principles is signed, Israel and the Palestinians will start negotiating details of the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

A month after the signing, the declaration officially enters into force and the timetable then unfolds as follows:

Immediately:
— Authority transferred from Israeli military government and civil administration to "authorised Palestinians" in five spheres: Education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism. The Palestinians will have authority in the West Bank and Gaza but it is not clear what authority they will have in East Jerusalem.

— Palestinians start building police force. Core will be PLO fighters from outside West Bank and Gaza.

— Joint Israeli-Palestinian liaison committee formed.

— Israeli-Palestinian economic cooperation committee established to work on: Water, electricity, energy, finance, transport and communications including Gaza seaport, trade, industry, labour relations, training, environmental protection, and the media, an internationally-supported economic development programme for the West Bank and Gaza and a regional economic development programme.

— Jordan and Egypt invited to join continuing committee to decide on procedures for admission of Palestinians displaced from West Bank and Gaza in 1967 (estimated at about 800,000 people including dependents) and measures to prevent "disruption and sees-

disorder."

End of month two:

— Israel and Palestinians sign agreement on Israeli withdrawal from Gaza Strip and Jericho area and detailed arrangements for



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, attends Friday prayers at the King Abdullah Mosque in Abdali, accompanied by Their Royal Highnesses Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein and Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad. Sheikh Mohammad

Hasem Al Khalidi delivered the sermon in which he spoke of the role of the Hashemite family in preserving the Arab and Islamic identity of Jerusalem (Petra photo)

3 Jordanians killed in Bosnia

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Three Jordanian citizens have been killed in Bosnia Herzegovina while fighting along with Muslim Bosnian troops "in defence of Muslim women, men and children," family sources said Friday.

Hasem Nahar Al Majali was killed two months ago and Fares Al Qesi a month ago, they said. No information was available about the time when Mustafa Bannich was killed.

The news about their deaths was first conveyed to the families by an anonymous caller who said he was from "the Qatari agency" and later confirmed by a relative

of Mr. Al Qesi who is also fighting in Bosnia, a sister of Mr. Al Qesi told the Jordan Times. She said the family tried to find out more about the "Qatari agency" through telephone calls to Qatar, but were told the agency does not exist.

The families of the deceased Friday announced the death of their sons in the Arabic press, naming them as martyrs who died defending Islam and Muslims.

Mr. Al Qesi's sister said her relative in the deceased family was buried in Bosnia. She said her brother and Mr. Majali left for Bosnia in March to defend the war-ravaged country after hearing about "the massacres to which Bosnian Muslims have

been subjected."

"He couldn't tolerate what was happening and insisted to go and help defend Muslims," Mr. Al Qesi's sister said.

She described her brother, 20, as "a religious man, but said he was not a member of any political party. She said the family tried to stop him from leaving for Bosnia and even hid his passport, "but somehow he found it and left without bidding us farewell."

A member of Mr. Majali's family said they were still trying to find out more about the circumstances of his death.

The family of Mr. Bannich could not be reached, nor were government officials available for comment Friday.

Jericho natives gather to discuss proposed Israeli-Palestinian plan

By Suhaib Obaidat
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A meeting of Jericho natives resident in Jordan failed to materialise when it was advanced from Friday to Thursday because of "miscommunication," according to organisers, but a small informal gathering was held Thursday in which participants discussed the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy agreement.

"The meeting was originally intended to be held on Friday, but due to technical reasons it was moved a day ahead. Miscommunication among the organisers and the invitees resulted only in a 50 per cent showing," on Thursday said Ali Musallam, a member of the executive committee at the Jericho Cooperative Society.

The meeting was called to formulate unified stand on the proposed Israeli-Palestinian self-rule plan.

Since the details of the prop-

osed plan "are yet unclear to us, mainly how and where the original natives of the occupied West Bank town of Jericho would be allowed to return upon the withdrawal of Israeli forces, we were unable to come up with an official position," he explained.

Attendees to Thursday's meeting mainly voiced their fears that Jericho will have to absorb the bulk of the 800,000 refugees who will be allowed back once the agreement is implemented.

According to Mr. Musallam, a preparatory committee was formed and was entrusted with the task of drafting an agenda for a meeting to be held next Friday during which a panel of seven to 14 spokespersons will be chosen.

Another concern among the attendees was "who decides who goes back to Jericho and on what basis; is it those who own land or property there? What if we had some land there and my grandfather had sold it? Would we still be considered Jericho natives?"

Mr. Mar'i noted that following the war of 1948, Jericho absorbed more than one million refugees who settled in and around the town.

"Are they also considered Jericho natives and will they be allowed back there?" he asked.

Mr. Mar'i hoped that answers to these and other "questions" would be provided by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), "so that we would be in the picture and be able to act accordingly," he said.

According to Mr. Musallam, a conference organised by the University of Jordan in cooperation with the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) to discuss prospects for the use of local primary materials in industry ended Thursday with a call for the creation of a Jordanian society dedicated to encouraging the use of local materials.

A total of 32 working papers were discussed by 50 engineers employed at Jordanian firms and institutions participated, said Mahmoud Hammud, a rapporteur for the conference preparation committee.

He said the papers focused on a wide range of topics, the most important of which included

PSD introduces road safety measures for children

By Rana Husseini
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Because road accidents have claimed the lives of some children on their way to school, the Public Security Department (PSD) has mounted a road safety campaign to help these youngsters avoid such tragedies.

The PSD recently adopted new measures to insure the safety of children in their commute to and from school.

Every school in the Kingdom was asked to add lights to the front and back of school buses, and to send bus drivers for a course to learn the new related procedures, explained Mosayad Muaslat, assistant director of the PSD.

"These new additions were designed to provide safety to children when they attempt to cross the street after descending from a school bus," he said.

When school bus stops to load or unload youngsters, it will start flashing its lights which indicate to drivers of vehicles on both sides of an undivided street that they must stop until they see that the children have crossed the street safely and the lights have stopped flashing.

Mr. Muaslat said the PSD is working continuously in this effort by providing programmes on local television and radio stations to educate drivers on the steps to take.

"Drivers' responses to this issue were encouraging, and people are learning gradually that they must stop when a bus is loading or unloading children," he said.

A bus driver who works at the Islamic Scientific College in Jebel Amman saw negative and positive points for the eight-day driving course he was required to take.

The driver, who preferred anonymity, said most of the in-

structions given in the course were important and essential to children's safety. He also added that what he benefitted the most from was how to handle children's safety during the winter months, when driving becomes more dangerous.

"We used to know traffic rules in a general aspect, but in this course, they explained the same rules in a scientific way," he said.

But, the driver said, the only element missing from this course was training in first aid.

"I wish the instructors would have spent some time teaching us how to react in case of an emergency, or how to perform first aid, because most drivers don't know anything about it."

The transportation affairs official at the college, who worked for the school for 35 years and is responsible for 52 buses, said he faced tremendous problems because of the new changes.

"It is going to cost the school a large amount of money to paint the buses orange," said the offi-

cial.

One of the parents who drivers his child to and from the school

U.S. team promise to study grievances stemming from sanctions against Iraq

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A U.S. delegation reviewing the impact of the international sanctions against Iraq on Jordan's economy has promised to study the Kingdom's grievances that it is being unfairly targeted and is paying a heavy price in the enforcement of the embargo on its eastern neighbour, officials said Friday.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali Thursday met with the delegation, which is headed by senior State Department official David Newton, and presented the Jordanian case.

Dr. Majali explained to the delegation "the difficulties faced directly and indirectly by all sectors of the Jordanian economy when leaving Aqaba, Jordan's only sea outlet."

The prime minister was referring to the strict guidelines and inspection procedures adopted by the naval task force which intercept and check every vessel heading for and leaving Aqaba.

Informed officials said Jordan had submitted to the U.S. delegation a report summarising the economic losses of Jordan as the direct and indirect result of the sanctions against Iraq, imposed after the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

He said Jordan was finding it difficult to get approval for exports of its products to Iraq while other countries in the region had no such problems.

Furthermore, he said, the costly delays for Aqaba-bound shipping caused by the inspections mounted by the U.S.-led international force patrolling the Red Sea.

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History is being made

AS EXPECTED Israel and the PLO recognised each other Friday with some trepidation but with optimism as well. Ostensibly the latest move came as a direct result of the secret meetings in Oslo and elsewhere between the two sides. In fact many other important factors and developments had collectively led to the inevitable bitter-sweet conclusion. The end of the cold war, the Gulf war itself and the Palestinian intifada were singularly the most potent international and regional developments that culminated in the "Gaza-Jericho first" deal and its integral element the mutual recognition between Israel and the Palestinian side.

On the face of it the much heralded two sided quid pro quo recognition does not seem to be on equal footing. On one side we have the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people bestow permanent and irrevocable recognition to the state of Israel. On the other, there is only a recognition of a national organisation, not a country or even a government. Yet a closer look would reveal that the Israeli acceptance of the PLO is also momentous since it acknowledges for the first time the existence of a people and therefore a nation. In other words, the Israeli state and the Palestinian nation were effectively given the seal of approval by both sides. This is no minor achievement. Rather it is a far reaching step that would pave the way to a permanent and just resolution of the Palestinian conflict, the core of the Middle East crisis.

Yet the road to peace in the area is still strewn with booby traps and landmines. The opposition to the accord on both sides of the fence is formidable and can still derail the achievements generated by the Israeli-Palestinian agreements. So far there is already a cabinet crisis brewing in Israel over the forced resignation of Ariel Sharon, the Israeli minister of interior and Rafael Pinsky, the deputy religious affairs minister. Both officials are from the Shas Party and their removal from office could mean the loss of Shas's critical six votes in the Knesset when the Israeli-PLO deal is put to the vote.

The vote of confidence that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has received from the executive committee of his Fatah group and the PLO in general has not been overwhelming by any stretch of the mind. The divided Israelis and Palestinians on the peace terms arrived at recently can be major obstacle to reaching true and genuine peace between them. Still, the peace momentum generated by the Norwegian-brokered deal can be viewed as a process that might not be easily reversed. The weight of the entire international community is on the side of the compromise agreement and opposition to it cannot be expected to terminate it. A new era has dawned on the Middle East and it is part and parcel of the new international order. The onus is on Israel now to convince the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab World that it wants a compromise acceptable to all in the end. It can begin today by meeting Palestinian demands for confidence building measures, and, as Faisal Husseini put it yesterday, by changing the mentality of occupier that it has lived with for the past 25 years.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily demanded that Israel also change its national charter if the Palestinians are to change theirs in the framework of the peace formula. The Palestine National charter calls for all of Palestine to return to Arab rule while the Zionist charter denies any right to the Palestinians in their own land, said Tareq Masarweh. The writer said Israel should change its national charter, which claims all of Palestine and parts of Syria and Lebanon to be the land of Israel, if it wants to reach real peace with the Arabs. The Palestinians should demand that as long as peace is in the cards, the Israelis should show flexibility and recognise the Palestinians' people's rights in their own homeland, continued the writer. He said there are certain Zionist groups which want to evict all the Palestinians from their land and therefore the Palestinians should demand that these groups cancel this demand and recognise the Palestinian people's rights. These, he said, are basic principles and basic demands and are logical facts that require logical handling in the ongoing negotiations. Jordan, for its part, has the right to demand that Israel change its map and stop claiming that part of Jordanian territory belongs to it, said the writer.

ANOTHER COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily criticised the official information services in Jordan as being geared only on praising the officials rather than reflecting the people's concerns and interests. Fahd Al Fanek said that any observer can easily discover from the way the Ministry of Information is handling affairs that the official information services has failed to live up to expectations in matters like the Gaza-Jericho first option and has retreated from the position it won over the past four years under democracy. In fact, the radio and television has been merely praising the work of the official while the Ministry of Information has been busy itself with the so-called press code of honour and other codes, charged the writer. The news bulletins have become tedious and lack ing spirit and the other programmes do not attract the listeners or the viewers who normally turn to other stations, he added. There has been a time, said the writer, when the official media in Jordan used to express the real public interest and reflect the public grievances and requests. It is regrettable, added the writer, to see the official media reverting to the pre-democracy era, dedicating its services only to the interest of the officials and the official departments.

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keilani

A deal is a deal, but Jordan has its stakes

IT HAS been widely accepted that Yasser Arafat has taken a gamble and staked the future of the Palestinian nation behind the much-touted Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement on autonomy in the occupied territories. Indeed, the decision represented the independent Palestinian will and choice, exercised by the PLO in its capacity as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, a status which it has enjoyed since the 1974 Arab summit in Rabat. As such, the PLO shoulders the responsibility for the positive and negative results of the autonomy agreement on the Palestinian cause as would materialise in due course of time.

No Arab country, including Jordan, could or should be put on the dock if, God forbid, the Israel-PLO deal goes awry and fails short of the minimum demands of the Palestinian people — their right to self-determination and territorial sovereignty.

But there are a few key elements that must only concern the Palestinians and also Jordan in a very direct way, and the thought would not just go away that these concerns could have been better addressed and a better deal reached with the Israel had His Majesty King Hussein been consulted for advice and suggestion if not for approval of Palestinian suggestions.

Recent revelations indicate that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres knew the details of the agreement at least 10 days before it was formally acknowledged as having worked out.

The question, although a little belated, is: If Mr. Peres, and by extension his boss, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, could be privy to such details which have direct bearings on Jordan, was it too much of Jordan to resent the fact that it was kept in the dark throughout the secret negotiations?

Granted, there had to be an element of secrecy for the process, particularly that it concerned the Middle East, long notorious for damaging leaks and surprising disclosures. In fact, many political pundits in the Middle East and elsewhere argue forcibly that there could not have been any breakthrough in the peace process had the negotiations been limited to the State Department meeting halls in Washington.

But there could be little justifications for Jordan being kept in the dark. Even when the whole thing was dragged into the open, it took several days before the details of the accord were made available to King Hussein.

For one thing, the valuable assessment of the King, a statesman and diplomat, as well as the longest-serving Arab leader, and his suggestions and advice could have only served the Palestinian position in the secret negotiations. And Jordan could have incorporated elements in the Palestinian position that directly address the Kingdom's concerns and stake in the Middle East peace process.

Now that we are presented with a *fait accompli* by the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, we have no choice but to go along with it, keeping our fingers crossed that the autonomy deal will indeed lead to the realisation of the objectives of the Palestinian struggle and produce a just and comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict.

Despite this posture, one cannot but raise several key questions: What lies at the end of the tunnel? Is autonomy an end in itself? Will the Gaza-Jericho option be the "first" or the "last"?

Within the context of Jordan's concerns, the question has to be raised, and the Palestinians have to answer it: What does the process hold in store for Jerusalem? The Palestinians should

acknowledge and respect the fact that the Holy City cannot be anyone's monopoly, given the historic role the Hashemites have played in not only defending it but also striving to maintain its Arab and Islamic identity at a time when Israel was hell-bent on Judaising the city.

One could think of numerous scenarios which could actually turn the "first" to the "last." Right-wing Israeli leaders have openly declared that if they regain power they would not respect and honour whatever the Labour-led government has agreed with the Palestinians. Against the uncertainties that are already plaguing the Israeli political scene, we, the Arabs, have to be guarded against all possibilities and courses of events.

For one thing, if Israel can demand and secure an abolition of the provision for armed struggle against Israel in the PLO charter, what is stopping the Palestinians from demanding an incorporation of a total Israeli commitment to a negotiated settlement with the Palestinian people and recognition of their rights in the constitution/charter/covenant of the Jewish state itself? Such a move, which it seems, could pass through the Israeli Knesset now, could go a long way in any future retraction by the Jewish state under a different government on some of the commitments included in the Israel-PLO agreement.

(By the way, I am not one of those who are perturbed by the protestations and demonstrations staged by Israeli settlers and right-wingers against the deal with the PLO. I think such expressions of rejection on both sides of the divide bave its positive effects, in terms of strengthening the negotiating positions of both. However, it remains to be seen how each side plays the "rejectionist" card to better advantage. Remember the 1981 episode in the Sinai when Israeli policemen water-cannonned and dragged Israeli settlers away from their strongholds while international cameras beamed it to the outside world and served the Israeli objective of "honouring" its commitment to the Camp David Agreement against "fierce internal opposition?" Those scenes, as seen from the West, aided Israel in improving its image as a "peace-loving country" surrounded by "hostile" Arab states.)

Jordan, the country which shares the longest confrontation line with Israel and has found itself at the receiving end of every disaster that befalls the Palestinians, cannot be denied its right to defend its national interests. Its endorsement of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians was not designed to clear the way for anyone to surrender Palestinian rights.

History will record that if the Palestinians fall short of achieving their complete rights, they could blame the independent Palestinian choice, witting or unwitting, personal or nationalistic, ambiguous or clear, destructive or constructive, exercised by their representative.

It is totally unfair that Jordan also has to pay a heavy price as a repercenation of the Palestinian decision. What we see today at the Amman stock market is only an indication of the economic stakes that Jordan has in the overall equation.

Whether anyone likes it or not, Jordan cannot watch with folded hands and await the future unfold itself. It has to move and restate its positions in forceful terms and make it compatible with the new realities brought in by the Israel-PLO agreement. And when it does, nobody should blame it for doing so, simply because what is at stake includes the future of Jordan.

SOON WE SHALL ENTER THE COMPROMISED LAND.



Israel, PLO recognition is Mideast milestone

JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's signature on a document recognising the PLO on Friday is a historic milestone on the road to Middle East peace.

Here is a chronology of peacemaking in the Middle East, a canvas of conflict since the birth of Israel.

May 1948 — Jewish settlers proclaim the state of Israel was broken out with Arab neighbours, Israel annexes large tracts of proposed Arab state. Only the West Bank (under Jordanian administration) and the Gaza Strip (Egypt) remain in Arab hands.

1956 — Egypt nationalises Suez Canal, Israel attacks Sinai Peninsula, pushes towards canal. Anglo-French troops invade Egypt, withdraw under U.S. pressure.

1964 — Arab states create Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as nationalist movement. Yasser Arafat's movement Fatah carries out its first raid on Israel the following year.

June 1967 — Israel attacks Egypt, Syria and Jordan in what it says is a preemptive strike. In the Middle East war, Israel grabs Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt — Golan Heights from Syria, and West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordan.

Nov. 1967 — U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 242, calling for Israeli withdrawal, recognition of all states in the area and a just settlement of refugee problem.

1969 — Fatah, its popularity boosted by guerrilla attacks on Israel, takes control of PLO and Arafat becomes PLO chairman.

1970 — Increasing strength of guerrilla groups in Jordan and succession of plane hijackings designed to publicise the Palestinian cause lead to conflict with the Jordanian army. Army wins, guerrillas take refuge in Lebanon.

Oct. 6, 1973 — Egypt and Syria attack Israeli forces in Sinai and Golan Heights.

Oct. 22 — U.N. Security Council passes Resolution 338 calling for a ceasefire, implementation of Resolution 242 and immediate negotiations to establish a just and lasting peace.

1977 — Egypt's President Anwar Sadat goes to Jerusalem in dramatic peace bid. Other Arabs denounce him as a traitor.

Sept. 1978 — Egypt, Israel and the United States sign Camp David Accords, offering limited autonomy to Palestinians in occupied territories. Israel continues to refuse to deal with PLO and PLO rejects autonomy.

1979 — Israel and Egypt sign a peace treaty in Washington under which Israel agrees to hand back Sinai to Egypt. It keeps the Gaza Strip. Arab states impose boycott on Egypt.

June 1982 — Israel invades Lebanon to drive out Palestinian guerrillas threatening its northern border, besieges Beirut. Mr. Arafat and followers forced to disperse through Arab World.

Dec. 1987 — Palestinian uprising — the intifada — against Israeli rule starts in West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Nov. 1988 — Palestine National Council declares a Palestinian state implicitly recognises Israel by endorsing Resolution 242.

Dec. 1988 — Mr. Arafat recognises Israel's right to exist and renounces terrorism, leading to the first formal contacts between the PLO and the United States in 13 years.

May 1989 — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir presents four-point plan based on holding elections in the occupied territories. Rules out talks with the PLO and an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Oct. 1989 — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker offers five-point plan, rejected by Mr. Shamir after he forms right-wing coalition in June 1990.

Aug. 1990 — Iraq invades Kuwait. Mr. Arafat alienates West and Palestinians — Arab backs by supporting Saddam Hussein.

March 1991 — U.S. President Bush says Gulf war victory opens "windows of opportunity" for resolution of Arab-Israeli conflict. Mr. Baker comes to Middle East on first of eight peace missions.

Aug. 1991 — Mr. Baker proposes Middle East conference by end of October. Mr. Shamir agrees to attend as long as issue of WHO represents Palestinians is settled.

Oct. 20 — Israeli cabinet says yes to U.S.-Soviet sponsored peace conference after Syria, Jordan and Lebanon agree to go.

Oct. 30 — Palestinian delegation at Madrid talks comprises residents of Israeli-occupied territories at Israel's insistence, excluding PLO from formal participation. PLO officials direct the team.

June 23, 1992 — Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party nusts Mr. Shamir's Likud in national elections.

January 19, 1993 — Israel parliament lifts 1986 ban that made PLO contacts a crime.

Aug. 12 — Israel does not object to unprecedented appointment of seven Palestinian peace team members to the PLO committee headed by Mr. Arafat that directs the peace talks.

Aug. 24 — Mr. Arafat shaken by defections and charges he tried to run the PLO single-handed. Palestinians slash talks team from 25 to 12 because of cash crisis.

Aug. 26 — Israeli and Palestinian leaders predict breakthrough at next round of peace talks. PLO official says Israel and his organisation finalised provisional accord in secret contacts on partial autonomy in occupied territories.

Aug. 30 — Prime Minister Rabin says he believes agreement will be signed at Washington talks. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres says Israel could recognise PLO if it scraps sections of its charter calling for extermination of Israel and renounces terror.

Aug. 31 — Hours before talks resume, Israeli cabinet approves draft agreement with PLO on Palestinian self-rule in Gaza Strip and Jericho. PLO says charter denying Israel null and void. PLO official says negotiations agree text of Declaration of Principles of Palestinian self-rule in West Bank, Gaza.

Sept. 4 — Mr. Arafat says his mainstream Fatah faction approved a self-rule deal with Israel and mutual recognition could be only days away. The United States says it has offered Monday, September 13, as a possible date for Israel and the Palestinians to sign a historic peace agreement in Washington.

Sept. 6 — Mr. Arafat's proposed peace deal with Israel is welcomed by Gulf Arab states, but fails to win public approval from Syria and has yet to get Arab financial backing to make it work.

Sept. 9 — PLO Leader Yasser Arafat signs a letter recognising Israel and renouncing violence.

Sept. 10 — Mr. Arafat's letter is hand-carried to Israel by Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Joergen Holst, whose country brokered the PLO-Israel deal. Mr. Rabin signs document recognising the PLO, opens way to a signing ceremony on Monday in Washington for peace deal between the PLO and Israel.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

PLO-Israeli deal leaves field open to questions

Reviewed by Elias Nasrallah

Gaza-Jericho first option dominated the editorials and the columnists' themes in the local newspapers in the past week. Also discussed were a host of domestic affairs and the impact of the PLO-Israeli agreement on Jordan.

Ibrahim Al Absi, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that now that the PLO-Israeli agreement has become a reality, one cannot help asking questions pertaining to the Israeli withdrawal following the end of the transitional autonomy period of five years and whether the Palestinian people will be granted the right to self-determination later on.

He said that the Arab masses are still to learn from Israel and the PLO whether the Israelis will give up Arab Jerusalem and whether they will demolish or abandon their settlements planted on Arab territory.

Taher Al Udwani, a columnist in Al Dustour, pointed out that 44 per cent of the Israelis oppose the PLO-Israeli agreement forming a serious obstacle to the implementation of the deal.

The writer said that this huge opposition has its influence on the Israeli society and could adversely affect the peace process with the Arab countries. The writer said it seems that the PLO-Israeli deal is opening doors for future conflicts.

Mohammed Subeih, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that the PLO owes its existence to the Arab countries and to the Arab summit meetings which declared that the organisation remains the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Therefore, he said, the PLO should seek endorsement of its agreement with Israel from the Arab League and should coordinate its steps with Jordan and the rest of the Arab countries.

Mahmoud Rimawi, who writes for Al Ra'i daily, said that the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles serves as a tool for reconciliation among Arab states in that it had attracted the support of many of them, including the Gulf states.

Middle East Peace Process

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1993 5

Arafat — 'teflon guerrilla' turned peacemaker



TUNIS (R) — The fight is not yet over for PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, warrior turned peacemaker.

Mr. Arafat has strode the world stage for three decades, instantly recognisable with his days-old stubble, military fatigues and chequered Arab headscarf folded in the shape of the Palestinian homeland for which he has fought tirelessly.

He hopes to go to Washington to sign an agreement on Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in the presence of world dignitaries — a scene unthinkable just a few weeks ago let alone in the days when the Palestinian tactics earned notoriety stained with blood.

Mr. Arafat signed an historic accord recognising arch foe Israel on Thursday. Israeli recognition of the PLO should be a crowning achievement in his career.

But the man dubbed the "teflon guerrilla" for his slickness in bouncing back unscathed from crises must now persuade his querulous movement to back a peace deal which his hardline opponents call a sellout.

Mr. Arafat first the headlines in the 1960s as spokesman for a new breed of Palestinian — the young fedayeen, dispossessed, angry and dedicated to armed struggle against the Jewish state.

A quarter of a century later there has been compromise after compromise on the original Palestinian dream.

Now he is trying to drag reluctant Palestinians into the biggest compromise of all — Palestinian rule in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, with no sure guarantee of what will follow.

The land on offer is only a fraction of the land which the vast majority of Palestinians believe is theirs by right.

In Damascus on Thursday, Palestinian opposition groups vowed to sabotage the accord with Israel and set up an alternative to the PLO.

"We are capable of finding ways and means to do it," said a statement quoting Ahmad Jibril, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC).

"We consider Arafat's leadership illegal. We want the election of a new leadership," the PFLP-GC said.

The feeling must be familiar to Mr. Arafat — the more he gains international respectability, the more he loses credibility with Israeli ministers, the more he alienates his old supporters.

Since Israel destroyed the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as a credible military force in Lebanon in 1982, Mr. Arafat has probably spent more time looking over his shoulder at his Palestinian opponents than waging any kind of war on Israel.

Many of them have turned against him over the years, angered by the way he takes unilateral decisions and imposes his own interpretation of PLO policy.

Abu Nidal left in 1973 and in 1983 Syria encouraged a PLO revolt in Lebanon. The rebels humiliated Mr. Arafat, forcing him and his guerrilla to leave from the northern port of Tripoli.

But in the past, through a mixture of pragmatic argument in private and sentimental rhetoric in public, Mr. Arafat has always managed to pull a majority of the PLO behind him.

Short, bald and potbellied, Mr. Arafat hardly cuts a heroic figure. But to Palestinians, even those lukewarm about his policies, he is known avuncularly as Abu Ammar, his *nom de guerre*, or as just Al Khaytar, the old man.

Born in Cairo on August 24, 1929, to a modest trading family, Mr. Arafat studied engineering at Cairo University.

He took part in the battles between Arabs and Jews on British withdrawal from Palestine in 1948 and then moved to Kuwait, where he set up a successful engineering business.

He and a small group of exiled Palestinians formed the first cell of the guerrilla movement Fatah in Kuwait in 1959. Fatah, now the largest PLO group, remains his powerhouse.

The first political recognition came in 1963, when Algeria agreed to let Fatah open its first office abroad.

Another watershed was the start of guerrilla operations inside Israel in 1965. Mr. Arafat's leadership was acknowledged and in 1969 he became chairman of the PLO.

But power and popularity had its drawbacks. The PLO fell foul of Jordan's conservative leaders, and by July 1971 the guerrilla presence in Jordan was smashed. The remnants of Mr. Arafat's forces trickled into Lebanon.

Fatah's original programme called for a united Palestine in which Jews and Arabs would rule together.

But from the mid-1970s Mr. Arafat accepted and lobbied for the alternative of a smaller state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the territory captured by Israel in 1967. Military defeat, in Lebanon

With recognition, Palestinian-Israeli bargaining starts

By Neil MacFarquhar
The Associated Press

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM — The bargaining really just began Thursday.

After decades of bloodshed and pretense that each other's claims to the land were best ignored, Israel and the Palestinians agreed it was time to sit down and hammer out the details of how they can live side by side.

Leaders from both sides acknowledged that most of the work lies ahead. The first step is implementing Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho. A rough outline was already worked out in months of secret negotiations in Norway.

"I would say 80 per cent remains open to negotiation on implementation," Mr. Rabin told Labour Party leaders hours before the recognition accords were announced.

The two sides agreed to this limited autonomy because it was deemed easier than tackling Palestinian self-rule in all the occupied territories.

They want that to lead to a state. They think they took the first step on the road Thursday.

"Lots of details are not negotiated," Mr. Nusseibeh told the Associated Press. But recognition between the PLO and Israel "means that it is the first tangible step in establishing our state and we hope it will be established by the end of interim period."

The clock on the interim period starts ticking as soon as the Israeli soldiers withdraw from Gaza and Jericho. Within five years, the permanent status of the occupied lands is supposed to be settled.

Most of all, Jerusalem has been wrangled over.

Mr. Rabin said that was his main reason for accepting the self-rule agreement.

"That is the first thing. United Jerusalem is not included," Mr. Rabin told his fellow Labourites.

Both Israelis from the right, who reject the autonomy as inviting Israel's destruction, and the left say Jerusalem is indivisible and will always be Israel's capital.

Hints emerged that there might be some form of accommodation in the disputed city. The Palestinians might be able to run their own religious, legal, tax, education, sewage and other affairs as they gradually gain authority to do through the West Bank under autonomy.

The solution for Jerusalem will be a united city under the sovereignty of Israel as our capital," Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, an architect of the peace plan, told a news briefing Thursday.

This does not contradict any municipal arrangements of administrations or boroughs for the same rights.

In both Gaza and Jericho, the two sides must agree on the acceptable date for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from population centres. That agreement is supposed to be finished within two months.

Access to the port of Gaza — heavily policed now by the Israeli navy and other forces looking for arms smuggling by fishermen — is another major issue.

Travel between Gaza and Jericho is a problem because 60 miles of Israel lies in the middle. Mr. Rabin said access would be limited because it has proved a successful means of stopping attacks on Israelis. Permits for Palestinians to work in Israel are also an issue.

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PLO recognition after 25 years that rocked world

By Michael Roddy
Reuter

NICOSIA — The PLO and Palestinian guerrillas spent 25 years waging a campaign of bombings, hijackings and assassinations to drive Israel into the Black September organisation.

But Israel kept a lid on the Palestinians' threat throughout the 1970s with repeated attacks on bases in Lebanon while hundreds of PLO members and supporters were killed during the Lebanese civil war.

A 1974 Arab summit bolstered the PLO's prestige by recognising it as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. By this time, Mr. Arafat and his Fatah movement had taken control of the PLO while some former PLO members had split to form dissident groups.

In 1992 gunmen shot and critically wounded the Israeli ambassador to London, Israel, which had been watching Palestinian activities in Lebanon with growing alarm, launched a massive invasion which it soon became clear was intended to be Beirut.

With the Lebanon capital besieged, Mr. Arafat and thousands of his fighters were evacuated by ship. A month later, the Israeli army attacked the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut, massacring hundreds of thousands of others.

These are only the latest of many reversals for the PLO during its more than quarter century of existence.

In September 1970, after guerrillas hijacked the western airliners to the Jordanian desert, Jordan's King Hussein sent loyalist bedouin troops against Palestinian camps around the capital Amman.

Hundreds of guerrillas were killed and Palestinians lost bases in the country with the longest border with Israel.

The Fatah core regrouped and guerrillas moved most of their activities to Lebanon. Palestinian leaders sanctioned the launching of the selective campaign that became known as the Black September organisation.

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Banking sources say Saudis cutting spending to curb deficit

JEDDAH (R) — Saudi Arabia is taking steps to cut its massive budget deficit by \$2 billion this year but Western media reports of imminent bankruptcy are wide of the mark, banking sources in the oil-rich Gulf state said.

The sources said the moves to curb government spending would mean the ratio of deficit to gross domestic product should narrow from 9.3 per cent last year to 6.3 per cent this year.

"It is clear the country is operating under a budget deficit (and) if it continued to expand, I would be very worried," one banking source said in an interview in Jeddah.

"If it continues then the media reports make sense ... but the authorities are already taking steps to deal with it," he said.

The sources said expenditure last year was about 270 billion riyals (\$54 billion) and unofficial estimates projected spending for this year to be about 196 million riyals (\$52 billion).

Saudi Arabia expects its budget deficit to fall slightly this year to 26.7 billion riyals (\$7.4 billion) from 30 billion riyals (\$8 billion).

last year.

The sources said the deficit-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratio was 9.3 per cent last year, which by international standards was high. The International Monetary Fund has placed the country's current GDP at \$119 billion.

The banking sources said this level of debt as a percentage of GDP was "high but not critical."

"The country is not bankrupt," one source said.

The New York Times last week spoke of financial instability in Saudi Arabia and the Washington Post later quoted an expert as saying the country was bankrupt. This has been strenuously denied by Saudi officials.

The newspaper said Saudi Arabia ran its reserves down over the past decade to less than \$51 billion at the end of last year from \$121 billion, suggesting this would not be sufficient to retain the royal link to the dollar.

But the sources said they believed this was inaccurate and one added, "we don't expect the currency to be devalued."

The source said the government was very much aware of its economic problems and was looking at more ways to cut expenditure and increase revenues.

"They have to find a way to balance their books," he said, adding that the budget deficit could be cleared by raising tariffs on imports and privatising some state-owned companies.

State subsidies, for example on electricity and gasoline, could also be cut, the source said. Steps were already being taken to phase out subsidies on wheat exports by persuading farmers to grow barely and other crops currently imported.

Saudi Arabia's economy experienced a recession during the 1980s due to a fall in oil prices in 1986 and voluntary oil production cuts from 1981 to 1985. Several years of budget and current account deficit have eroded the kingdom's once substantial financial reserves.

But Saudi officials argue the economy had started to recover from the 1991 Gulf war, which cost Saudi Arabia \$55 billion directly and billions more indirectly, and the kingdom can afford to go ahead with plans to build a powerful modern state.

Report says Palestinian economic development, trade needed for peace

PLO proposes economic blueprint for Palestinians

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuter

nation-building in the oil-rich Gulf states," Yusef Sayegh, overall coordinator of the project, told Reuters recently.

Officials said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) position at a World Bank meeting in Washington this month will be based on the plan drawn up by a 90-member research team commissioned by the PLO's economic department over the past two years.

The "Palestinian Development

Programme 1994-2000", a two

stage, five-year economic rehabilita

tion plan, focuses on using

Palestinian expertise to build a

modern economy.

At the core of the PLO vision is

tapping the Palestinian diaspora's

financial and human resources

and attracting investment by

wealthy Palestinian business lead

ers.

Some economists estimate that

expatriate Palestinians hold ab

out \$20 billion in assets outside

the territories.

Lacking their own state, Palestini

ans have long helped

form the backbone of many Arab

economies and a PLO-Israeli rec

ognition agreement Thursday

paved the way for a deal granting

them interim self-rule in the occu

ped territories.

"(The plan) underlines the imp

ortance of tapping the Palesti

nian human capital and accumul

ated experience in the export of

skills ... over the last few decades

especially their role in modern

industry.

The PLO's vision is closest

to the model of the geographica

lly small but dynamic Asian states of

Hong Kong and Singapore, with a

well-educated labour force

channelled into hi-tec industry.

Mr. Sayegh said \$2.5 billion would initially be needed to get the economy on its feet.

"The issue of funding during the interim period is not expected to be a major problem as international aid agencies have already expressed readiness to contribute," Mr. Najji said.

The World Bank has invited Israelis and Arabs to Washington this month to discuss its own \$4.3 billion economic development plan for the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the G-7 group of major industrialised nations is also expected to play a leading role.

The programme factors in expected compensation from Israel which officials said the PLO would request for the use of Palestinian land and water during military occupation.

An earlier plan specifies compensation demands of \$3 billion but it was not clear whether the figure is still valid.

Mr. Najji said the free-market Palestinian economy would have stronger links with other Arab states, particularly Jordan, with Israel.

"We are aware of an Israeli thinking of using the area of Palestinian self rule as a bridge towards Arab markets ... but our view is that of a Palestinian economy with an Arab focus to minimise the effects of such an Israeli trend," Mr. Najji said.

Cuba moves closer to mixed economy

HAVANA (R) — Cuba took another cautious but groundbreaking step towards establishing a mixed economy Thursday when its communist government authorised limited, individual private enterprise in a wide range of trades, crafts and services.

Ordinary Cubans welcomed the decision and predicted the return to city streets of private vendors and tradespeople who had disappeared after the so-called "revolutionary offensive" of the late 1960s when Cuba's rulers extended state control to all sectors of the economy.

"It looks like the beginning of a new stage," one Havana office worker said.

The move, announced in a decree law signed by President Fidel Castro, effectively lifted a longstanding virtual state monopoly of production, employment and sales on the communist-ruled Caribbean island.

A range of more than 100 trades and services were declared open to individual, private enterprise. These included taxi drivers, mechanics, plumbers, carpenters, painters, hair dressers, cobblers, cooks, domestics, craftsmen,

farm products, salesmen and even computer programmers.

Citizens in Havana, tipped off by state radio reports, scrambled to find scarce copies of the official newspaper Granma to find out exactly what kind of economic activity they would legally engage in by themselves.

The authorities made clear the move was a direct response to Cuba's severe economic crisis, which had created unemployment among the island's nearly 11 million people, disrupted public services and caused shortages of food and basic consumer goods.

Although some very limited individual economic activity had been allowed in the past, foreign diplomats in Havana said the range of trades and services now opened up represented a major step towards allowing private initiative in an economy traditionally completely dominated by the Cuban state.

Cuban finance officials recently visited allies China and Vietnam and the diplomats said the latest move may have been influenced by examples in those two countries of private enterprise coexisting with a state-controlled economy.

Under the latest liberalisation, self-employed private entrepreneurs would be allowed to benefit directly from their work.

"Direct sales to the population of goods and services produced by these workers will be permitted," a statement released by Cuba's state finance and labour committee said.

The statement outlining the regulations, published in Granma, added prices could be negotiated between buyers and sellers.

The latest move formed part of a group of economic reforms being implemented by the government to tackle a crippling economic recession triggered by the collapse of Cuba's trade and aid ties with the former Soviet Bloc, its main supplier and market for three decades.

In August, the authorities removed a ban on Cubans owning and using hard currency like dollars, the first of a series of proposed measures to boost the country's depleted hard currency income and overstate state finances.

The published regulations barred university graduates, especially doctors, and company directors and management per-

sonnel from taking part in private economic activities, designated in Spanish as "trabajo por cuenta propia" (working on one's own account).

But workers, especially those unemployed or only partially employed because of the economic recession, housewives and retired people had the right to exercise private enterprise, as long as they did not employ other people.

Diplomats noted this formula appeared to leave the way open for private family businesses of the kind existing in China and Vietnam.

The regulations specified it would be up to the authorities to decide whether individuals could leave their state jobs to practice a private trade or service.

In contrast to many other developing countries, Cuba's previous virtual state monopoly of production, sales and employment had meant that its streets were always curiously empty of private vendors and tradespeople.

Private economic activity had been largely restricted to the large and flourishing, but clandestine, black market.

China airline efficiency falls

PEKING (R) — China's airlines have lost efficiency because of mechanical failures and too rapid growth, forcing authorities to suspend approval of new airlines and curbs plane imports, the People's Daily has said.

Only 81.9 per cent of planes had left on schedule since May, down from 92.1 per cent in the same period last year.

The main reason was mechanical failure, accounting for 29

per cent of the delays, followed by bad weather, transport service problems and insufficient trained staff and equipment to keep up with rapid growth, the newspaper said.

It said that in recent years the growth in aviation traffic had averaged 30 per cent a year, making China one of the biggest aircraft customers in the world.

The Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), which

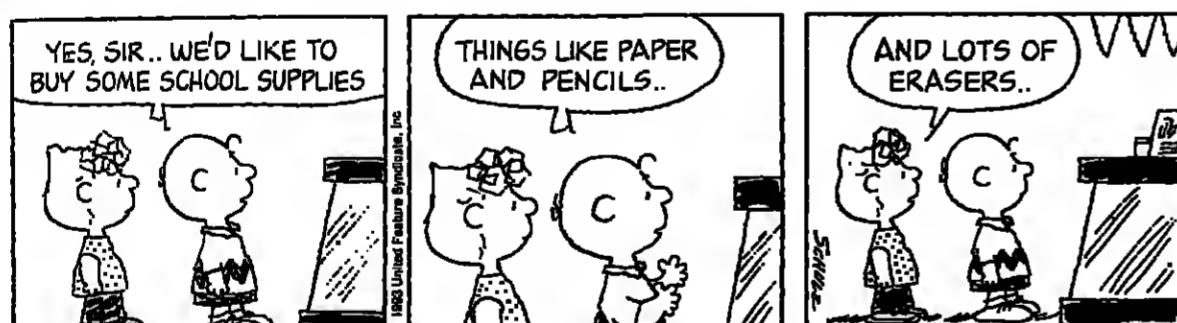
oversees the nation's airlines, had decided to suspend temporarily the approval of new airlines and strictly curb imports of planes. It would concentrate instead on improving service, the daily said.

Xinhua News Agency quoted CAAC Vice Director Ke Deming as saying the worst affected airports for punctuality were Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Peking. China Eastern Airlines,

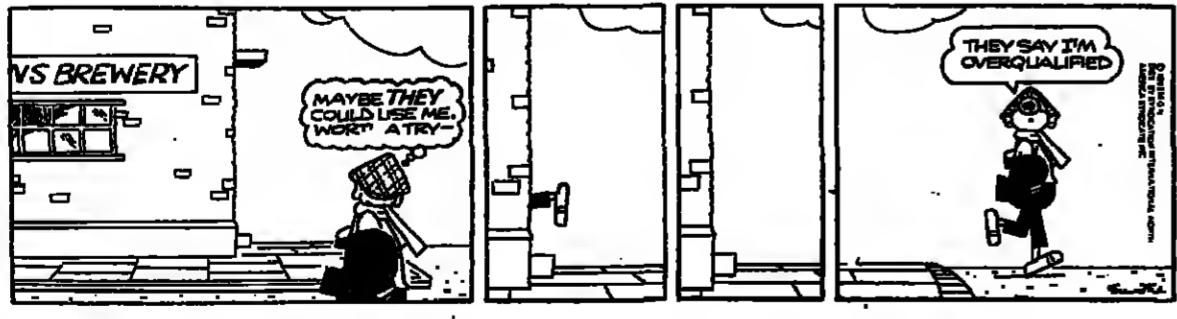
base in Shanghai, and Yuuan Airlines, in the southwest province of Yunnan, had the best records.

Aviation safety is a growing concern for China, where passenger traffic mushroomed 33 per cent last year. There are now more than a dozen inexperienced but boldy competitive carriers in the country, where once there was one.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt 'n' Jeff



THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"I think you should get a life-sized picture of Mel Gibson tattooed to the front of your body."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

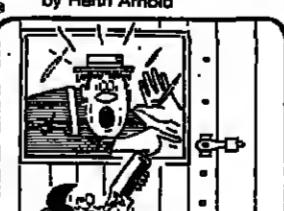
LYDOM

DATUL

SPOLGE

RICHEP

THAT SCRABBLE WORD GAME by Henri Arnold



WHAT THE BUTCHER'S SON HAD WHEN HIS DAD GOT LOCKED IN THE REFRIGERATOR.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

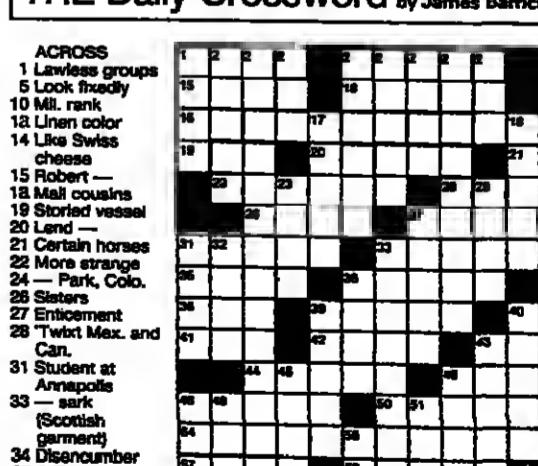
(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: ARBMA STOOP BUSILY DEMISE

Answer: What the lowest voice in the prison quartet was—A STRIPED BASS

The Daily Crossword

by James Barrick



ACROSS

1 Lawless group

5 Look fixedly

10 Mill rank

14 Green color

15 Swiss cheese

18 Robert

19 Mall cousins

20 Stand

21 Goliath horses

22 More strange

24 Park, Col.

28 Sisters

27 Enticement

28 Twit Max. and Gertie

31 Student at Annapolis

33 —sark (Scott

World News

Russia, Turkey will cooperate in ending Karabakh conflict

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russia and Turkey will cooperate in combatting Armenian "aggression" against Azerbaijan. Turkey's prime minister said after meeting Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Tuncu Ciller did not detail the cooperation, and Mr. Yeltsin himself refrained from singling out one side for blame in the conflict raging between Russia's neighbours in the former Soviet Union.

But Mrs. Ciller said Mr. Yeltsin had agreed that recent warfare constituted "Armenian aggression, that is against the law and should be stopped." She made the comments during a news conference after a two-day visit to Russia, a historical rival with Turkey in the Caucasus region.

Armenian and Azerbaijani forces have been fighting for five years over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, located within the Azerbaijani and populated mostly by Armenians. The war has claimed 15,000 lives and turned about 1 million people into refugees.

In recent months, Armenian-backed forces from Nagorno-Karabakh have taken control of the territory and pushed it into Azerbaijan proper, seizing towns and coming close to the Iranian border.

The offensive has alarmed Turkey and Iran, which have been competing with Russia for influence in oil-rich Azerbaijan. Iran and Turkey last week began moving

troops to their borders with Azerbaijan, raising fears of a clash.

Mrs. Ciller's statement could help lower tensions that rose last week after she herself threatened to arm Armenia against Nakhichevan, an Azerbaijani enclave that Turkey is bound to protect under international treaties.

But on Thursday, Mrs. Ciller said she saw no immediate threat to Nakhichevan.

A NATO member, Turkey is concerned over Azerbaijan's recent tilt toward Russia, which came after pro-Turkish President Abulfaz Elchibey was ousted in a military revolt in June.

The new leader, Azerbaijan's ex-communist party boss Geydar Aliyev, plans to join the Commonwealth of Independent States and its Russian-dominated collective security pact. This week, he won a pledge of help from Russia to end the war, although it remained unclear how Russia would help.

For its part, Russia is concerned about the Turkish build-up on Armenia's border, which Russian troops are helping guard. Russia also resents Turkey's effort to expand its influence in Azerbaijan and Central Asia.

Despite the friction, relations between Russia and Turkey have been improving since the Soviet collapse in 1991. Mrs. Ciller unveiled plans for economic cooperation, including doubling the imports of Russian natural gas to four billion cubic metres a year starting in 1996.

Diplomats also were working

on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict Thursday. The Minsk group of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe began a three-day round of informal talks in Moscow in an attempt to reach a ceasefire, news reports said.

Mrs. Ciller has suggested sending observers to the Caucasus to Mr. Yeltsin, the semi-official Turkish News Agency, Anatolia, reported Friday.

The Foreign Ministry said Kiev has agreed to supply another 40 tanks to Azerbaijan.

The Ukrainian arms supplies "run contrary to the international community's efforts" to end the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by negotiation, the Foreign Ministry added.

Meanwhile, Kiev has expressed concern about the escalation of the war in a message to the Armenian Foreign Ministry said separately.

Iranian envoy Sakhram Hasmali delivered a letter from Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati to his Armenian counterpart, Vahan Papazian, in Yerevan Thursday, the Foreign Ministry said, cited by Interfax.

Tehran condemned the Armenian separatist forces recently when they advanced south from Nagorno-Karabakh towards the Iranian border. Iranian troops recently held manoeuvres near its border with southwest Azerbaijan.

She said that the constitution of such a peace force would have to be at the request of Azerbaijan, "an independent and sovereign country. Without a request from Baku, nobody can do anything," Mrs. Ciller said.

Meanwhile, Armenia has accused Ukraine of supplying Azerbaijan with tanks, aircraft and weapons for use in its war against

Yeltsin aide: Ex-Soviet states will unite

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin's chief spokesman predicted Friday that the former Soviet republics would eventually unite both politically and economically.

In comments likely to rile some of Russia's neighbours, Vyacheslav Kostikov also said that Mr. Yeltsin, under pressure from conservative opponents to submit to early elections, would serve out his presidential term until 1996.

But it was his remarks on relations with the former republics that appeared likely to raise political hackles.

"Only flaming nationalists... fail to see today that in the wake of economic union... political union will logically and inevitably follow," he wrote in the daily Komsomolskaya Pravda.

"This is a question of time. But to deny this imperative means not to see or feel either history or the real aspirations of millions of ordinary citizens."

Although two years have passed since the Soviet Union collapsed, many Russians find it hard to think of the independent states as foreign countries.

They often refer to the former republics at the "near abroad," a region in which Moscow still feels it has a historic role.

Mr. Kostikov, in an ironic reference to the growing dependence of these neighbours on Russia, noted that Moscow had lately seen a "veritable parade" of visiting leaders.

"We even realised, not without surprise, that the path to Moscow from the capitals of former union republics is not so overgrown after all," he wrote.

"All that's needed is to uproot a few prickly nationalists and the road will be clear for a 'new deal' that will define the geopolitical contours and strategic parameters of a new commonwealth."

In recent months, economic and political necessity has forced a number of Commonwealth states to reconcile themselves with giving up some elements of sovereignty in exchange for support from Moscow.

Russia and five other former republics signed a deal Tuesday to keep the Russian rouble as their common currency. The five will have to adjust their customs, tax, banking and credit policies to standards set by Moscow.

An agreement on broad cooperation within an economic union is due to be signed at a CIS summit in Moscow on Sept. 24.

Of all Russia's neighbours, Ukraine has been the most wary of any encroachment on its hard-won independence.

But the country's disastrous economic plight forced President Leonid Kravchuk last week to agree to sell Ukraine's share of the Black Sea Fleet to Moscow — a deal denounced as an act of treachery by nationalists.

Russia has made no attempt to conceal its glee over the sale. Mr. Kostikov said it marked a political "rubicon" for Russia, ending the era under former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev when Moscow too often gave away something for nothing.

It was the second time this week that a close Yeltsin aide had ventured into the domain of foreign policy.

News in Brief

Sihanouk has tumour, delays return

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk said he has a tumour and will not be able to return home from Peking until it is removed. "This new health problem adds to my previous problems, especially the herding of my large and small arteries. I therefore must continue treatment in Peking," the Cambodian head of state said in a statement he sent to the royal palace in Phnom Penh late Thursday. "I will immediately return to the motherland to be near and serve my compatriots when the health problems pertaining to the growth are cured," he said, adding his return would not be delayed two or three weeks. Prince Sihanouk's facsimile message said the operation involved removal of a tumour at the end of his large intestine.

Colin Powell to serve in public life

WASHINGTON (AP) — Gen. Colin Powell has said he feels an obligation "to do something in public life" after taking time off to write his memoirs and visit Israel. That "does not suggest politics is my rage now," he added, but he wouldn't say never. Gen. Powell, appointed by President George Bush, has been mentioned as a possible Republican presidential candidate. In an interview with the Associated Press, the retiring chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff discussed his 35-year military career, which officially ends on Sept. 30 when the baton is passed to Gen. John Shalikashvili. Gen. Powell was the first black chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the youngest man ever to hold the office. As the nation's top military officer during the Gulf War, Gen. Powell became a well-known figure to the American public. And his week as a possible political candidate seems high. In the interview, Gen. Powell gave the strongest indication yet that he will not intend to disappear from the public arena.

N. Korean defector fuels nuclear fears

SEOUL (R) — A North Korean secret agent who last week defected to the South Friday fuelled Western suspicions that Pyongyang has developed a nuclear bomb. Ahn Myung-Jin told a news conference organised by Seoul's Defence Ministry that the government in Pyongyang regularly told North Koreans they were being patriotic by keeping the Stalinist nation's nuclear capacity a secret. "In North Korea we are educated by the government to tell foreigners we don't have nuclear weapons, even if we do," Mr. Ahn told reporters. But he said he had no definite knowledge of Pyongyang's nuclear capability. Pyongyang officially denies there are any nuclear weapons. North Korea has refused to allow international inspectors into two plants where Seoul and its allies believe an atomic arsenal is being assembled.

U.S., S. Korea discuss nuclear threat

SEOUL (R) — Senior U.S. and South Korean officials met Friday to work out joint plans to persuade North Korea to accept inspections of its nuclear arms sites. Robert Gallo, Washington's chief negotiator with Pyongyang, held talks with South Korean Associate Foreign Minister Shin Ki-Bock to try to improve the bleak prospects for detente across the cold war border. "This session is a necessary and valuable consultation at this very difficult juncture in addressing North Korea's nuclear problem," Mr. Shin said at the start of the session, attended by 12 delegates from each side. The North dashed hopes for resumption of long-stalled nuclear talks with the South this week when it demanded Seoul declare a halt to its annual military exercise with the United States before any contact took place.

Greece to hold elections on Oct. 10

ATHENS (AP) — Greek President Constantine Caramanlis announced Friday that early general elections would be held on Oct. 10 as he signed a decree dissolving parliament in the wake of defections in the ruling conservative New Democratic Party. An official communiqué said the new parliament would be summoned to meet on Oct. 25. He also gave key portfolios to three independent personalities ahead of the new polls. Aristovoulos Manassis, a professor of constitutional law, was named interior minister to succeed Ioannis Kerasiotis, retired General Dimitris Manikas took over the public order portfolio from Nicolas Glezos and senior judge George Playamakos replaced Anna Psarouda-Benaki as justice minister.

Tajik rebels destroy Russian depots

DUSHANBE (AP) — Muslim rebels in Tajikistan attacked and destroyed six Russian army artillery munitions depots near Dushanbe, triggering huge explosions and fires that continued to burn Friday, officials said. The attack Thursday, the most serious assault by rebels near the capital in nearly a year, coincided with a visit to Dushanbe by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev who has been urging the government to negotiate with the armed Muslim opposition. Colonel Sviatoslav Nabzdrov, chief of staff of the Russian army's 210th Motorized Division in Tajikistan, said the blasts and fire caused no casualties and posed no immediate danger to residents in Lur where the depots were located. Local residents were however evacuated as a precautionary measure as troops fought to extinguish the blazes, he said, adding that some 1,000 tonnes of artillery shells and other weapons stocks had been destroyed in the attack.

Armenian separatist forces in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Interfax News Agency reported Thursday.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry has protested to the Kiev government. Claiming it has delivered to Azerbaijan nine tanks and MiG-21 fighters, among other weapons, the agency reported.

The separatist forces of Nagorno-Karabakh have already shot down two of the Ukrainian fighters.

The Foreign Ministry said Kiev has agreed to supply another 40 tanks to Azerbaijan.

The Ukrainian arms supplies "run contrary to the international community's efforts" to end the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by negotiation, the Foreign Ministry added.

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Meanwhile, Armenia has accused Ukraine of supplying Azerbaijan with tanks, aircraft and weapons for use in its war against



A South African policeman stands near a burning taxi after it was set on fire by protesters near Kalliehong east of Johannesburg (AFP photo)

6 more killed in S. African townships

Killings after political break-throughs.

The killings were also condemned by President F. W. De Klerk and the ANC's bitter rival Inkatha Freedom Party.

More than 1,100 people have been killed in political violence in South Africa in the two months since negotiations began April 27 as the date for the country's first non-racial election.

The ANC said the massacre at the taxi rank was clearly linked to the TEC agreement and followed a pattern whereby break-throughs in negotiations were followed by outbreaks of violence.

Mr. Buthelezi has set up a watchdog council to set up ahead of elections will fuel political violence.

"The ANC is the most powerful organisation in the country and its growth is fueling violence and the growth of deep discontent and resentment," Mr. Buthelezi said.

Violence flared Wednesday when gunmen shot dead 25 people at a taxi rank in Windhoek, a factory suburb near the three townships.

Hours after the taxi massacre, gunmen struck at a taxi rank passengers at a taxi rank in Kalliehong.

Another two people were killed in a copycat attack on a vehicle travelling in the same area early Thursday.

The shootings came a day after democracy negotiators agreed on a draft bill which will end the white-majority government's rule over black people.

The ANC said its proposal to end racial segregation was part of a pattern of

preliminary indications ... point to a political motive for these latest atrocities, which appear to be linked to the current cycle of intolerance, intimidation and conflict involving supporters of the Inkatha and the ANC," he said.

ANC President Nelson Mandela expressed anger at the taxi rank massacre.

"Whenever we make a breakthrough, then these massacres occur. It is quite clear that they come from those elements that are against a peaceful settlement," he said.

The ANC, whose rivalry with

Mr. Klerk, said Thursday the latest violence appeared to result from ANC-Inkatha rivalry.

Waitress who befriended customer gets \$500,000 estate

French tourists end up in wrong country

LONDON (R) — Three French tourists who stopped for directions when they were slightly lost were shocked when told they were in the wrong country. Three women from Paris, who had booked into a hotel in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, mixed up their travel plans and ended up in Portsmouth, Hampshire, in England. They thought that after an eight-hour trip from France they had arrived in the United States. A helpful policeman realised their mistake when he checked their hotel brochure. "I didn't know if they were going to laugh or cry when, in broken English, they asked 'are we in the wrong country?'" "Fortunately... they saw the funny side of it," he said.

Cambodia bans right-hand drive car imports

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's government has banned the import of right-hand drive cars, a Ministry of Commerce statement released Friday said. The ban became effective on Sept. 8. But people who had obtained import licences before that date could still bring their cars into the country, the statement said.

The ANC said the massacre at the taxi rank was clearly linked to the TEC agreement and followed a pattern whereby break-throughs in negotiations were followed by outbreaks of violence.

The Pretoria Supreme Court Thursday threw out a legal challenge to the election date brought by the Kwaziola government. Mr. Buthelezi said the ruling would not lead to the homebound's return to talks.

Mr. Klerk said Thursday the latest violence appeared to result from ANC-Inkatha rivalry.

Waitress who befriended customer gets \$500,000 estate

CLEVELAND (AP) — An 18-year-old waitress who befriended an elderly restaurant patron will get most of his \$500,000 estate under settlement of a lawsuit filed against his will.

Mr. Buthelezi, whose delegates split the constitutional talks two months ago in protest at their failure to sway decision making, said decisions at the talks can only be implemented through the barrel of a gun."

"The potential for action against the election is already high and will grow weekly," Mr. Buthelezi said, adding that the poll was aimed at consolidating ANC power and would spell the death of democratic aspirations.

The ANC, whose rivalry with

Mr. Klerk, a former state factory manager who is one of the few politicians to retain public popularity, said Thursday that the experiences of the past three months had shown that "the executive is no longer able to govern". His chief complaint has been that both the president and parliament have refused to give him sufficient powers to implement reforms.

NATO can act alone — Woerner

Mr. Woerner said the Bosnian conflict had demonstrated the need for a sharp definition of the intended mission, as well as a clear mandate, unified command and delineation of responsibilities for the groups involved.

On a broader level, Mr. Woerner reaffirmed the need to maintain the alliance's strong U.S.-link but called on European allies to assume more responsibility for security in their own

territory.

"Public opinion in the United States will not be indifferent to what it perceives as the failure of Europe to defend its own interests," he said. "The result can only be a more resolute U.S. leadership, and less involvement of the United States."

Mr. Woerner said that one of the priorities of the NATO summit tentatively scheduled to be held here in January should be to "open up a more concrete perspective" of membership for the Central and East European states.

Relations between the two have come under scrutiny following criticism of U.N. military actions in Somalia and questions over how a multinational force would operate to police an even

small Bosnia peace settlement.

U.S. President Bill Clinton said Tuesday the United States would contribute troops for Bosnia only if it were a NATO operation. But France insisted that all such actions should be under U.N. authority.

Marcos's body goes on display in glass coffin

and gold coffin as

Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1993 9

Tapie pulls out of confrontation

PARIS (AFP) — Olympique Marseille owner Bernard Tapie pulled out of his confrontation with international football chiefs Friday in order, he said, to save French football from a world-wide ban.

Tapie dropped his lawsuit against the European Football Union (UEFA) to enable the French to escape the wrath of international football federation (FIFA) President Joao Havelange of Brazil.

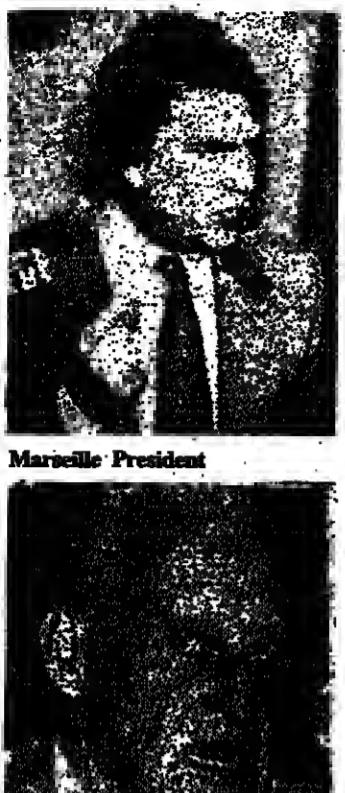
Havelange had threatened to ban the French national team and all French clubs from international competition if Tapie continued to defy the game's governing body.

The French soccer champions had won a stay of execution of UEFA's European Cup ban Thursday which threw the competition into turmoil.

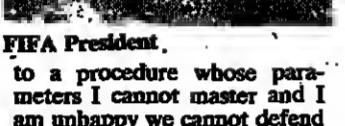
"French football was in danger of disappearing from the international scene," Tapie said from Marseille.

"Only by abandoning our lawsuit could French football be saved. I hope our fans, our players and our officials will be recognised for putting France's interests above their own individual interests," he added.

"I am profoundly sad and shocked at having to give way



Marseille President



FIFA President

to a procedure whose parameters I cannot master and I am unhappy we cannot defend

GÖREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
2 TAHAN HIRSH
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NEUTRALIZE THE THREAT

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

4 5

Q 10 6 4

Q Q J 10 5

A K 4

WEST

6 5 2

Q 8 7

Q A 8 2

6 6 4

A J 3 2

10 9 8

SOUTH

9 A 7

K K Q J

Q A 9 3 2

4 Q 6 5

The bidding:

South: West: North: East:

1 NT: Pass: 2 NT: Pass: Pass: Pass:

Opening lead: Queen of 4.

The holiday season is traditionally the time for giving, and this year bridge players are especially lucky. There are several new books available that will make wonderful presents. One that is sure to be popular is Eddie Kantar's *Take Your Tricks: Over 550 Declarer Tips That You Can Take to the Bank* (Regina Books, paperback, \$10.95). Available from the author, Box 474, Venice, Calif. 90294, \$11.95 postpaid. Unlike most sequels, this follow-up on Kantar's bidding tips is perhaps better than the original. Written with wit and wisdom, you'll want to buy at least two copies—one for yourself

and one, to quote George Bernard Shaw in an invitation to Winston Churchill to attend the opening night of a new play, "and one for a friend, if you have one!"

Consider this hand from the chapter "Planning the Play at No Trump Contracts." You reach three no trump on a normal enough auction and West leads the queen of spades. Since you might have to surrender the lead twice before you set up nine tricks, how do you intend to proceed?

The first step is to refuse to win the queen of spades, West, who did not overcall, is unlikely to have both the ace of hearts and king of diamonds. After winning the spade continuation, which red suit do you attack?

Kantar advises: "Cross to dummy with a club and finesse the diamond. If that wins, you have had two tricks. If it loses, West has been defanged. (His entry is removed), knock out the ace of hearts. What if West has both entries? Why not ask asking these terrible questions?"

The tip: "With two stoppers and two cards to remove, you may be able to control which entry to remove first. Attack the entry, or the possible entry, of the player with greater length in the suit that has been led."

Couldn't have put it better ourselves!

Armiger may silence Leger Classic critics

DONCASTER (R) — Armiger can silence the critics by running out an impressive winner of Saturday's St. Leger, the final classic of the English horse racing season.

The Leger has come in for occasional debate over the past few years with claims its standard has steadily fallen as longer distance races become less fashionable.

A quality performance from Henry Cecil's colt — or any other runner — would go a long way towards salvaging the ailing reputation of the 14½ furlong (2.9 km) event.

Of the expected 10 runners, Armiger, the 100-30 second favourite, is certainly well placed to impress.

The colt is already a group one winner Opera House adds a real touch of class to Saturday's Irish champion stakes which should prove an easy stepping stone to next month's Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe.

With the going at Dublin's Leopardstown Track officially reported as good, trainer Michael Stoute decided to let the five-year-old take his chance in Ireland.

With similar underfoot conditions guaranteed for Saturday, Armiger, who has been working particularly well at home, can put two recent defeats behind him and land another classic for owner Khalid Abdullah and jockey Pat Eddery.

The Leger is already a group one winner and was among the favourites for the Derby until injury forced him out of the race.

Cecil's colt's success at the highest level came on the Doncaster Course in last season's racing post trophy.

The son of Rainbow Quest was always up with the leaders that day, clearly enjoying himself on the easy ground and eventually racing three-and-a-half lengths clear.

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birth stone!

DAJANI
JEWELLERS

Amra Hotel - Amman.

U.S. Open

Pioline, Masur reach semifinals



gave up the match with a double fault on match point.

Larsson said he was never close to repeating the form that upset Boris Becker in the fourth round. "I did not get any rhythm on my serve, and also Wally, he served very smart today," Larsson said. "He mixed it up, slow and hard, so I mean, I wasn't close to breaking him."

The other semi-final pits second-seeded Pete Sampras, the highest seed left in the tournament, against number 14 Alexander Volkov of Russia.

Both of the men's semis are scheduled for Saturday. The women dominate the action Friday.

In their semi-finals, world number one Steffi Graf meets Manuela Maleeva Fragniere and second seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario plays Czech 12th seed Helena Sukova.

One title was decided Thursday, as Sukova and Australian Todd Woodbridge defeated Martina Navratilova and Mark Woodforde in the mixed doubles final.

That match was interrupted twice by rain before Sukova and Woodbridge won 6-3, 7-6 (8/6).

Tha made twice this week Sukova has triumphed over Navratilova. She beat the third seed in the fourth round of the women's singles.

U.S. OPEN NOTEBOOK

For the first time in the history of the U.S. national tennis championships, the eight men's and women's semi-finalists are from eight different countries.

The women's side boasts Steffi Graf (Germany), Arantxa Sanchez Vicario (Spain), Helena Sukova (Czech Republic) and Manuela Maleeva Fragniere (Switzerland).

For the men it is Wally Masur (Australia), Alexander Volkov (Russia), Cedric Pioline (France) and Pete Sampras (United States).

Aussies stick together: Australian players on the men's tennis tour are a close-knit bunch, according to veteran Wally Masur.

Maradona signs with Argentine club

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Diego Maradona has signed with Argentine first division Newell's Old Boys, his agent Marcos Franchi said Thursday.

The 32-year-old former Argentina captain had been courted by several first division teams, including San Lorenzo and his first club Argentinos Juniors, since he walked out on Spain's Sevilla in June.

But Newell's Old Boys, from Rosario 300 km north of Buenos Aires, offered Maradona the best overall package, including pay and playing conditions. The amounts were not disclosed.

Newell's finished bottom of the Clausura first division championship in June.

Maradona's second comeback could prompt Argentina coach Alfio Basile to call him up for crucial World Cup playoffs against Australia next month and in November.

The player and coach seem to have patched up their differences after a row brought on by Basile's failure to summon Maradona for the South American qualifiers in which the twice world champions narrowly escaped a shock elimination last weekend.

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CONCORD 2

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Tel.: 699238

Tel.: 634144

Tel.: 675571

Tel.: 625155

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TO D A T

PHILADELPHIA

Robert Redford

Demi Moore — in

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Problem Child 2

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

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presents a play entitled:

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Actors: Abeer Issa, Deoud Jalal, Hassan Al Shaer, Fuad Shomali.

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Every night at 8:15

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Arab Summit Conference

9

Yemen endorses self-rule accord as independent Palestinian decision

Bassindawh laments disarray in Arab ranks, urges collective stand on 'new world order'

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Yemen Friday extended support for the Israeli-Palestinian autonomy agreement but declined to assess the merits or shortcomings of the accord, saying it represented an independent Palestinian decision and the Palestinians have to evaluate it for themselves.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Mohammed Salem Bassindawh also lamented the disarray in Arab ranks following the Gulf crisis triggered by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and said his country supported Jordan's calls for an Arab summit to settle Arab differences.

Mr. Bassindawh, addressing a press conference at the conclusion of a three-day visit to Jordan, said however that there was little response to the call from other members of the Arab League.

The minister said his country's endorsement of the Israeli-Palestinian accord was in line with its 1974 recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

"We are not eligible to evaluate the (Israeli-PLO) deal," he said. "It is up to our Palestinian brethren and their sole legitimate representative to decide what is best for themselves."

Expressing hope that the agreement would lead to a comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement, the minister, however, cautioned against inter-Palestinian fighting over the issue.

"We hope our Palestinian brothers would not forget that their real enemy (Israel) is very much there and would not turn their guns against each other," said Mr. Bassindawh. "It will be a catastrophe, a disaster."

In reply to a question, he said Yemen had not formulated any position vis-a-vis the possibility of relations with Israel in a post-peace era. "First and foremost, Yemen is not a party directly involved in the conflict," he said. However, he said, Yemen will not adopt any decision which may run contrary to Palestinian in-



Mohammad Salem Bassindawh

said, was posing grave challenges to the Arabs.

"It is ironic that the Arabs could reach agreements with a common enemy (Israel) while they could not agree to settle differences among themselves and face a common challenge," he said.

In a general review of the Arab situation and the "new world order," Mr. Bassindawh appeared to offer an insight to not only the Yemeni thinking but also a general perception of the Arab World vis-a-vis the Israeli-PLO accord.

"Since 1967, we have been demanding the return of all occupied territories including Jerusalem," he said. "We rejected the (1978) agreement (worked out by the late Egyptian President Anwar) Sadat and we called him a traitor. But now it appears that the (Sadat) deal was much better than what we are prepared to accept today."

The continuing international sanctions against Iraq and the crises with the West involving Libya as well as Sudan are also part of the "new world order," he said, emphasising the need for an in-depth assessment of the Arab situation through an Arab summit.

Dr. Muasher emphasised that his reference is not to a peace treaty but to an agenda that lists issues to be discussed in the Israeli-Jordanian track. "Contrary to press reports that we have been seeing all along, but particularly lately, this is not a framework for a peace treaty and it is not a peace treaty or a peace agreement. It is a list of the issues to be discussed, and as such it's a starting point that would allow us to discuss between us and Israel. It does not in any way constitute anything close to a peace treaty or a peace agreement," he explained.

He reiterated Jordan's position on the issue of a separate peace with Israel. "We are not going to sign a separate peace treaty with Israel. We will only come to an agreement with Israel in the context of a comprehensive peace with all the Arab parties, and under no conditions are we going to enter into a separate peace treaty with Israel," he stressed.

Asked whether Jordan will be involved in the peace process, he said, "We are doing what we can" to address the problems, he added, "are trying to adapt to their new life and we are trying to create opportunities for works for them."

He said the country's oil production was limited to 400,000 barrels per day, "which is very little compared to the (needs of) 14 to 15 million people."

'Jordan-Israel agenda is no treaty'

Jordan Information Bureau
Washington

IN HIS FIRST briefing for the 11th round of bilateral Middle East peace talks, Jordanian spokesperson Dr. Marwan Muasher said that Jordan would be in a position to move on, and probably announce, the agenda of the Jordanian-Israeli track if and once the Palestinian-Israeli accord is signed. He indicated however that the announcement of the agreement on the agenda can "simplify" the implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, Dr. Muasher said: "I hope that progress on any track would be helpful to progress on other tracks. Of course, the Palestinians have already done or gone beyond what we have done in our negotiations with the Israelis, particularly with the signing of the Declaration of Principles."

"There will be no simultaneous announcements of the agenda and the Palestinian-Israeli accord, as our agenda, one, is not finalised and, two, as we await the signature on the Palestinian track," Dr. Muasher said. "We are not sure when the agenda will be announced. This, of course, depends on when we can finalise it. There are still language differences to be ... agreed on," he added. He later indicated in response to a question that the modifications are "not directly" related to the Israeli-PLO agreement.

Asked whether the working groups on the Jordanian-Israeli track remain "provisional" in nature because the agenda has not been finalised. He indicated that in discussions of those groups, there has not been much progress beyond the opening positions of each of the parties and the exploration of ideas on both sides. He added that contrary to what reports in the U.S. press have stated, no projects have been agreed to by the two sides. Some of the working groups are still working on sub-agendas for their group meetings, he noted. Should there be a formal announcement of the agenda, the provisional working groups would become formal working groups, he said. "I would expect progress to happen at a hopefully faster pace than has been the case so far," he said.

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Dr. Muasher said Jordanian-PLO coordination will be "much stronger" from now on because of the details that will have to be worked out in the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration on Principles where Jordan is involved.

Asked about reports that Jordan was not consulted on the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, Dr. Muasher said: "At the beginning ... we were worried that the agreement has parts in it which Jordan was given a role without its prior coordination or without consultation ... As we looked thoroughly at the agreement, we saw that this was an invitation for Jordan to come in and assume a role that will be coordinated with the other parties and not a role that is preset without Jordan's consultation, and as such we do not feel that the agreement presents the concerns and worries that we had at the beginning."

The exiles were expelled in the midst of a severe winter in which heavy rains and snow often washed away tents and turned mud lanes in the camp to small rivers.

The four-member Red Cross team that visited Friday examined 50 men but determined that none needed urgent hospitalisation, as some camp leaders have contended.

They said they would report their findings to the International Committee of the Red Cross headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

The timing of the repatriation was seen as a gesture by Israel in support of its decision to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Friday's visit by the Red Cross appeared to be yet another good-will gesture.

The last time Red Cross representatives were allowed by Israel to visit the camp was Jan. 23, when they were flown in from Cyprus to evacuate four living exiles and 13 others Israel said were expelled in "error."

U.N. says it tried to avoid heavy Somali casualties

MOGADISHU (R) — The U.N. defended itself from accusations Friday that cannon-firing helicopters killed 100 Somalis, including women and children. It said it tried to keep casualties down but saw anyone in an attack as a fighter.

"In an ambush there are no sidelines for spectators," U.S. military spokesman Major David Stockwell told a news briefing on Thursday's incident, in which one U.N. soldier was killed and five others were wounded.

Bandits shot dead two Somalis working for the U.S. Cable News Network (CNN) and wounded two others in an attempted car-jacking on Friday as tension boiled in the streets a day after the battle.

Gumtins lurking in nearby bombed-out buildings fired at two U.S. helicopters that boomed over the stricken car which had been sent to investigate reports of a militia mortar attack against the U.N.-controlled airport, wounded survivors said.

U.N. officials said they had no confirmation of Somali claims that 100 civilians were killed on Thursday when U.N. helicopters

went to the rescue of an ambushed patrol.

"It is regrettable if women and children were killed. But all the

Jordanian (-Palestinian) delegation if and when Israel recognises the PLO," he said.

Dr. Muasher denied that such a revaluation would be based on "a sense of anger" because the Palestinians have gone ahead with an agreement with Israel. "I just said that all options will be open, that coordination with our Palestinian partners will (occur) before any decision is taken," he stated.

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Remaining expellees appeal to Red Cross

MARJ AL ZOHOUR, Lebanon (AP) — Palestinian expellees in South Lebanon appealed Friday to a visiting Red Cross team to urge Israel to speed their repatriation.

The 217 men remaining in the hillside camp were among the 417 men deported by Israel in December 1992. More than 180 others were taken back Thursday, with the rest to follow by year's end.

Dr. Abdul Aziz Rantisi, a Gaza physician who serves as spokesman for the group, said the Red Cross delegates agreed to raise the issue of faster repatriation with Israel.

"The Red Cross will debate an early return of the remaining deportees so they would be repatriated before the rains come," Dr. Rantisi said. He said the expellees' tents "could not endure another attack of rain and snow storms."

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COLUMN

From Turkey with love

MOSCOW (R) — Tansu Ciller, the first woman prime minister of Turkey, ended her official visit to Moscow with a message of love for 150 million Russians. The Yale-educated economist said at a news conference at the end of her two-day visit: "I have a message for the Russian people — I first fell in love with the Russians from Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels. Since then I've had a liking for them." "I'm so happy about all the warmth I've received here," she said. "She's just trying to woo the Russians," blessed a Turkish journalist from among the media audience. Mrs. Ciller — dubbed at home "Turkey's first prime minister without a moustache" — is a former professor of economics at Istanbul's Bosphorus University. She became prime minister in June.

Yeltsin to see Spanish surgeon for back pain

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has suffered back pain in recent days and invited a Spanish surgeon to Moscow for a consultation. A Kremlin aide said Thursday. Presidential spokesman Anatoly Krasikov said the surgeon, who operated on Mr. Yeltsin's back in Barcelona three years ago, was flying into Moscow Thursday. He said the president had been experiencing discomfort but this was not preventing him from carrying out his duties. "He is fully capable of going about his business," Mr. Krasikov said. A medical report, made public by the presidential press service, said Mr. Yeltsin was experiencing "pains in the lower back region, spreading into the leg. It noted that the president, 62, had undergone the 1990 operation in Spain for lumbosacral radiculitis — inflammation of the root of a spinal nerve. He was injured on that occasion when an airplane in which he was travelling hit turbulence and had to make an emergency landing. Mr. Yeltsin, whose left foot was temporarily paralysed, later said that had it not been for Spanish doctors he would have been crippled for life.

Some senators said the gunship attack showed it was time for U.S. troops to leave the country they went to save from famine.

But France backed the U.S. over Thursday's attack, accusing militias of deliberately using civilians as a "human shield."

Militias loyal to fugitive warlord Mohammad Farah Aidid have clamped a stranglehold on U.N. operations in south Mogadishu.

On Sunday, a mob trapped and killed seven Nigerian troops.

S. Korea rejects 2nd bid for Michael Jackson concert

SEOUL (AP) — South Korea has rejected for the second time a bid by singer Michael Jackson to perform, making it the only country to ban a performance by the U.S. pop superstar, officials said Friday. Jackson's first request to perform was rejected three weeks ago on the grounds his worldwide dangerous tour would reflect badly on the new civilian government's policies of austerity and frugality. The Ministry of Culture and Sports cited President Kim Young Sam's drive to rid society of corruptive influences and said a Jackson concert could have a potentially negative effect.

"The answer is no," said an official of the Ministry of Culture and Sports Friday, declining to be identified in keeping with official practice. "Even if the application arrived again, we would make the same decision." In recent days, U.S. business and government leaders have written letters on Jackson's behalf, suggesting it could adversely affect U.S.-Korean relations, especially among African-American leaders.

The U.S. embassy has said it regretted any decision to bar Jackson from performing. U.S. commercial counselors supported the application.

TV airs death threat against Menem

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — A television station broadcast a death threat against President Carlos Menem, reportedly left by an anonymous caller to its studios. The male voice on the answering machine recording, broadcast on Channel Nine's evening news programme, accused Mr. Menem of corruption and called him a traitor. The voice warned that Mr. Menem would be shot if he made a scheduled appearance Monday on a popular daytime television show, "Lunching with Mirtha." It also threatened to kill the grandchildren of the talk show's hostess, Mirtha Legrand, the caller shouting: "How could six boys occupy the radio and television station with a pistol?"

On. Around 30 men were arrested last April and held at the GID in the same case, but most of them were released in August.

Colonel Hafiz Amin, the judge presiding the three-man military panel, asked the defence team to submit written objections, and adjourned the court until Wednesday.

Col. Amin also approved the defence's request to appoint a doctor and psychiatrist to conduct medical check-ups on the defendants to report on any signs of torture.

Addressing the court, Mr. Armuti — who was also a defence lawyer in the "Prophet Mohammad's Army" case in 1991 — described the charges as "null and void."

The suspects, five of whom were students at the military university 130 kilometres south of Amman, were also accused of trying to "change the Constitution of the state through illegal and violent means," and belonging to an illegal group, the Islamic Liberation Party (Hezb Al Tahrir Al Islami).

After the charges were read out, defence lawyers refused to allow their clients to enter any plea. They cited two reasons for this objection: That the arrests and conditions of their detention since last April were illegal and that the State Security Court was not the authorised court to try such a case.

The proposal also mentions the need to disarm all "terrorists" and elements hostile to the peace process, and for the Israeli and Lebanese armies to be deployed only inside their own territories.

Chief Lebanese delegate Suheil Shammas said Thursday he received a copy of the draft statement of principles from his Israeli counterpart Uri Lubrani.

Mr. Shammas reaffirmed his long-standing demand that a "joint military committee be given the key aim of programming an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon, in accordance with U.N. (Security Council) Resolution 425."

Speaking on behalf of the nine-man defence team seated facing the panel of judges, attorney Saleh Armuti accused the General Intelligence Department (GID), which he said was not authorised to conduct the interrogations, of "physically and psychologically torturing" the suspects while they were held at the department prison cells for three months before they were transferred to Zarqa military pris-

on.

Col. Amin warned the public, most of whom were the suspects' relatives and